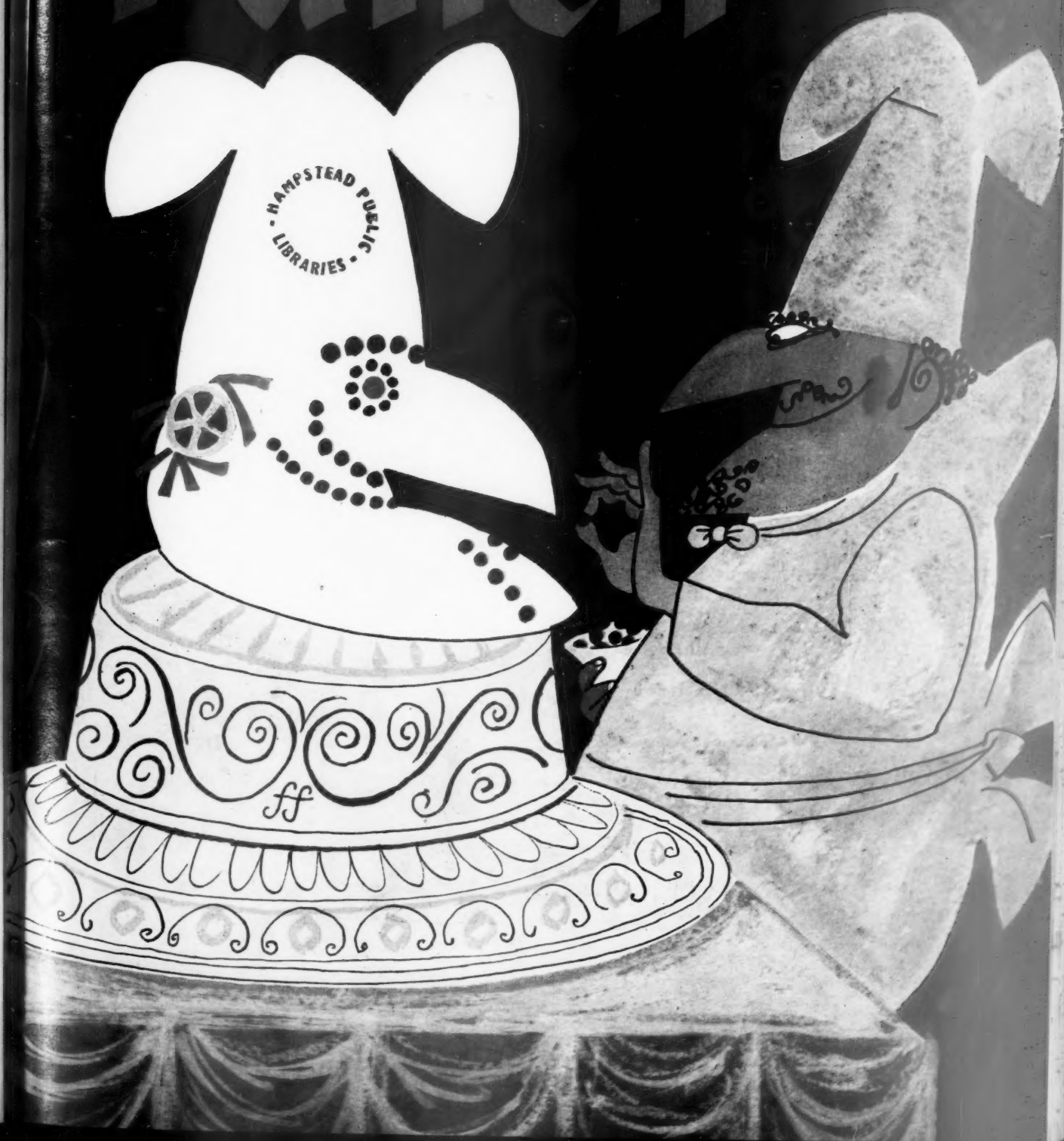


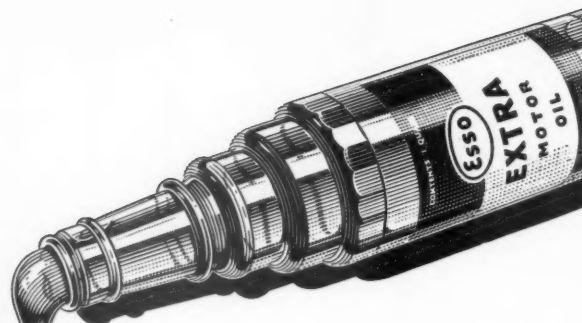
Punch

9d



*Protect your engine
when it's idle as well as
when it's running
—use*

**THE
OIL THAT
STAYS ON
THE JOB**



**EXTRA
MOTOR OIL**



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Subscriptions

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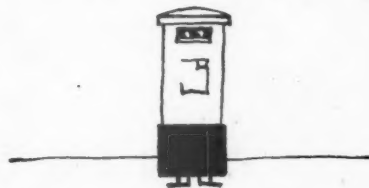
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The London Charivari

ALL the topical talk about traffic was bound to bring up again that old suggestion that travel on the railways should be free. It seems less fantastic this time. From the general impression of railway finances, chiefly publicized in terms of immense deficits, it looks more and more as if cash actually paid through the booking-office window is a mere drop in the bucket and would hardly be missed. The great obstacle to the scheme is, of course, redundancy, particularly in the case of ticket-inspectors, though no doubt jobs could be found for them searching passengers to make sure they had no tickets.

Conversion Job

CONGRATULATIONS to the Flying Squad for sparing no pains to clear up the Hatton Garden case. According to reports they kept tireless



watch from "cars made up to look like trade vans"—when lesser men would have borrowed some trade vans.

Pretoria

ONE of the most interesting and welcome cards I have received this Christmas is one bearing thirty signatures—"With all good wishes from

the 30 defendants in the Treason Trial in Pretoria." It reproduces a photograph of "Madonna and Child" (now in St. Paul's) by Josephina de Vasconcellos and is issued on behalf of the Christian Action Race Relations Fund, incorporating the Defence and Aid Fund. The good wishes are renewed and returned.

The Nose Has It

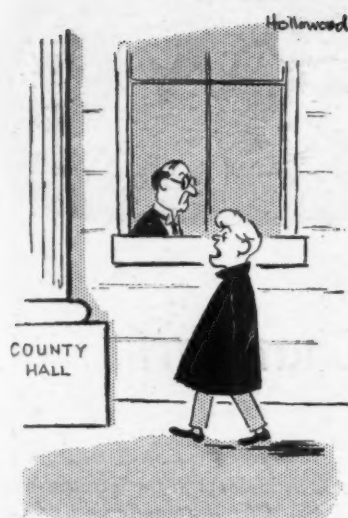
EVEN relatively inexperienced housewives were surprised to read that Egg Marketing Board experts were



trying to find a means of "measuring egg quality other than by visual examination . . ."

Strike a Light

IT is usual at this season for left-wing papers to scoff at the gem-encrusted swizzlesticks, and so forth, advertised in the glossy weeklies. But times change: *Reynolds News*, organ of the Co-ops, notes with pride (or, at least, without censure) that a £1,200 cigarette lighter is on display at the London Co-operative Society's Oxford Street store. It is of solid gold, studded with diamonds and rubies, and took two craftsmen eight weeks to make. What a pleasing picture this conjures up: an oil heiress, opening her fiancé's shyly



"... goodbye Piccadilly, farewell Leicester Square..."

offered parcel and exclaiming "Darling, it's magnificent! And from the Co-op too. They're so much more *fun* than Cartier's." Then, after a pause: "Darling, what are you going to buy me with all that divy?" No wonder Mr. Bevan is worried about where the Left is heading.

Note of Cheer

SOME things at least are well arranged. We get the shortest day over before the really bad weather is likely to begin. Days become lighter as they become colder. If February were as dark as December, England would never have been nicknamed "Merrie."

The Glass of Fashion

NOT so long ago "a glass of Madeira" (preferably with a slice of cake) had a period ring of the nineteenth century, but a lavish current advertising campaign seeks to put it among the top tipples of to-day. The accompanying Victorian cake would have been no good to Falstaff—he sold his soul to the Devil on Good Friday for a cup of Madeira and a cold capon's leg. Cake, capon or no, there is an agreeably full-blooded note about this revival, for the wine is as well-fortified with brandy as any; it goes smoothly with an age that has never had it so good.

Road to Freedom

SOME members of the Crowther Committee have suggested that the raising of the School Leaving Age should not apply to pregnant girls, presumably because they have no more to learn and might, perhaps, have too much to teach. But have the chivalrous protectors of the Unmarried Mother considered that among some children dislike of school is so strong that they might induce co-operative fellow-pupils to give them the required status? The school where the curriculum is interesting and the teaching lively might have few premature parents; but there are some schools where exemptions from the provisions of the Act might be frequent. Any Government that wanted to keep the birth-rate steady would have to see that the entertainment value of lessons stayed high.

Too Many Handshakes

THAT was an unkind headline, "Mr Eisenhower's Tilt at the Summit." Heaven knows, we can't always expect to be caught at our most graceful moment by press photographers.

Whereas Heretofore . . .

I SUPPOSE it's a sign of the times that the Bill urging better office conditions was forced through its Second Reading by Labour M.P.s,



"Ear about this Education Report that's going to do away with teenagers?"

Next Wednesday's PUNCH will contain seventeen pages of drawings from the sketch-book of Ronald Searle, with notes by Kaye Webb. Their subject is
Refugee Year

assisted by strong trade union lobbying. But where is all that lusty old scorn for the white-collar worker? If the measure goes through it's likely to enforce the biggest cleaning up in the whitest-collared strongholds of all, in solicitors' offices and legal chambers, where unhygienic dust will at last have to be swept from the document-stuffed pigeon-holes, and some of the stuffing pushed back into the waiting-room upholstery. It is likely to be a confusing time for senior partners and old chief clerks: once organization gets a toehold it takes some stopping. In an office where Mr. A.B.C.'s papers have been kept in a tin box labelled Mr. X.Y.Z. for twenty-five years any major readjustments could mean thromboses all round.

In There Pitching

THERE was some speculation over the *Daily Telegraph* headline, "U.S. Firm on Integrated N.A.T.O. Force." I don't know which firm this is, but General Motors and Bethlehem Steel are going to be right behind it, trying to get on too.

Pinchpenny Sam

AMERICAN realists will have welcomed the report that Congress is only to be asked for "limited funds for space work" in the coming fiscal year. The allocation is being kept down to \$800,000,000.

Enosis, You Know

DESPITE plenty of news about the Makarios political victory, little was heard about the preceding election campaign, or the slogans used on either side. The President-Archbishop's forenames are disinterred from reference-books only with difficulty, but turn out to be Mikhail Christodoulou Mouskos: quite possibly his supporters carried lapel-badges saying "I like Mike."

— MR. PUNCH



TO TRAVEL HOPEFULLY . . .
or, Anyone know a longer way round?

B. A. Young presents



PUNCH'S BRITISH MUSICALS

SERJEANT MUSGRAVE'S SALAD

There is no Serjeant Musgrave in the play, and no salad, come to that. The title is devised to appeal equally to the audiences at the Vaudeville and Royal Court Theatres. So is the rest of the play, which deals with all the burning questions of the day.

SCENE I

A Chelsea launderette. A line of washing-machines extends to each side of the stage. JOE is taking his washing out of one of them on one side, PIXIE out of one on the other side. JOE (of course) is a negro; PIXIE (naturally) is a lady of easy virtue but golden heart.

Duet—JOE and PIXIE

JOE: I've sat and I've sat by this wretched machine,
And my horrible laundry is nothing like clean.
PIXIE: I gaze at my undies churned round in the drum,
And I know I'll be gazing till Kingdom Come.
JOE: Yet the funny thing is, though I struggle my best,
I can't, as I should, feel the least bit depressed.
PIXIE: And I'm just the same—when I ought to be tearful
I still remain incontrovertibly cheerful.

BOTH: We're happy, yes so happy—
How happy can you get
As you watch your smalls go whirling
In a Chelsea launderette?

UNCLE GODOT, an emaciated character from Picasso's blue period, comes on and gives each of them a packet of detergent.

Song—UNCLE GODOT

Free! Free! Absolutely free!

A packet of SNURGE for you from me.

It's the wonder-joy of washday as the little bubbles pop,
And you get a set of teaspoons just by tearing off the top.
But careful how you use it!—it's my duty to advise you
That indiscreet employment brings results that may surprise you

Still, it's free! Free! For spotless lingerie
And not yet advertised on ITV.

He disappears. JOE and PIXIE pour detergent into their washing-machines, happier than ever.

SCENE II

King's Road, Chelsea. Enter JOE in bus-conductor's uniform, with GEORGE his driver, a fine upstanding young Englishman somewhat weak in the head.

Duet—JOE and GEORGE

BOTH: Black and white Is always right
Whatever they may say in Notting Hill!
GEORGE: I'd ten times rather take a
Conductor from Jamaica
Than some old bore from Rannoch Moor or Rhyl.
BOTH: White and black Is all right, Jack
Let Nottingham think diff'rent if it will!
JOE: The Englishman, as all agree, is such a decent sport
GEORGE: That when he speaks of "races" it's the horse or
greyhound sort,
BOTH: And if he says it isn't, we'll have him up in court!
It's the black and the white for me!
JOE: Man, just you wait till I put on my summer light-weight jacket. I've just washed it in SNURGE, the new wonder detergent.
GEORGE: I bet Pixie will be thrilled when she sees you in it.
JOE: You gonna be our best man, George?
GEORGE: Course I am.
JOE: Well, I'll just slip in this doorway and put my jacket on.
(He does. When he comes out his face is contorted with malice and he is toying with a flick-knife.)
GEORGE: What's up then, Joe?
JOE: Don't Joe me, you poor white trash. (Slouches off.)
GEORGE: Always said you could never trust a spade.

SCENE III

King's Road, later that night. PIXIE stands on the pavement.

Song—PIXIE

PIXIE: I know I ought to hate him, yet somehow I admire him.
It's just his sense of duty, I'm sure, that must inspire him.
How many ways are there to praise that man?
In the Cole Porter style I'll try to compile what I can—

Mr. Butler is the olive in my cocktail;
Mr. Butler is the filter in my tank;

The fluoride in the water-main,
The witch in *Allan Quartermaine*,
The burglar-alarm at the Bank!
Mr. Butler is the marrow in my oxtail;
Mr. Butler is the fern in my grot;
The air from Londonderry,
The stone within the cherry,
The best Home Secretary
We have got!

PIXIE's friend MAUREEN comes on, a delicate English flower.

MAU: Singing to keep your spirits up, dear?

PIXIE: My spirits are always up. I was just singing about Mr. Butler, the Home Secretary.

MAU: That —

PIXIE: Come off it, Maureen, he's a smashing bloke really. All these things he does are for our own good in the end.

MAU: Proper little Tory you're getting since they brought in that Act, I must say. I brought you a clean headscarf in case it rains. I washed it in that new SNURGE. Look, not a stain in sight!

PIXIE: Oh, Maureen, you are good to me. (*She ties it on. Instantly she is convulsed with rage.*) Well, don't hang about

here all night, clot. How can I do any good with your ugly mug dogging me all the time?

SCENE IV

In the Magistrate's Court. The Magistrate is about to start the day's hearings.

Song—MAGISTRATE

I love prisoners, I love crooks,
I love their manners, I love their looks.
They're ever so sweet as they stand at the bar
And they always tell me how sorry they are.
I can hardly remember a score of times
When I've not forgiven their silly old crimes,
And the man in the dock has no call to blench,
For he's never sent down when I'm on the Bench.

Now, what delicious criminals have you for me this morning? Burglars? Murderers? Motorists?

CLERK: Put up George Flanagan. (*GEORGE is brought into the dock.*) You are charged with causing an affray at the World's End last night. Guilty, I suppose?

GEORGE: If you say so, Your Honour.



MAG.: No no, Mr. Flanagan, I insist. We're *never* guilty in this Court.

GEORGE: OK, not guilty then.

MAG.: That's better. Any evidence?

CLERK: Joseph Banks. (JOE goes into the box.)

Quartet—MAGISTRATE, CLERK, GEORGE and JOE

CLERK: Be so good as to tell the beak

Just what you say took place.

JOE: This damn fellow, I hear him speak
Slightly of my race.

MAG.: I'm sure he didn't! It's quite absurd!

"Race," you know, is a dirty word.

CLERK: But what was the crucial circumstance
That caused him to threaten your life?

JOE: He feels in the pocket of his uniform pants
And pulls out a damn great knife!

MAG.: I suppose you're certain of what you saw?
To pull out a knife is against the law.

You look a reliable chap to me—

Your face is honest and frank and free,
Your pants are pressed and your shoes are bright,
And your shirt and hanky are Whiter than White!

JOE: I feel my pride give a sudden surge—
My hanky's white 'cause it's washed with SNURGE!

MAG.: SNURGE! Indeed!

JOE: For a wondrous sight,
Hold my handkerchief up to the light.

(He hands it up to the MAGISTRATE, who immediately assumes an expression of bestial ferocity.)

MAG. (to GEORGE):

You wretched monster! I'll have you flayed
For daring to threaten this smart young spade.

GEORGE: Alas, Your Worship, he made me do it;
His constant nagging just drove me to it.

MAG.: Beast! I can scarcely believe my ears.
Go to prison for twenty years.

SCENE V

The same Court, later that day. (MAUREEN in the dock.)

Song—MAUREEN

I stood last night in a Chelsea street,
I stood last night with my friend;



And how could I know, when the world was so sweet
That our friendship would come to an end?

I'm guilty—so guilty;

I know it was all my fault;

Though I loved my pal, yet I sloshed her,
And I'm guilty of common assault.

Just for a name that she called me,

A name that can sometimes niggle;

Though I know at the time it appalled me,

I'm sure it was said for a giggle.

Yes, I'm guilty—so guilty;

My conscience is cut to the quick;

For I hit my best friend round the ear-hole,

So send me away to the nick!

MAG.: My poor child, your sad story bring tears to my eyes. (It does.) Someone give me something to dry this unmanly flow. Usher, where's the handkerchief we had in that case this morning? (The usher hands it up, and the MAGISTRATE, having wiped his eyes, is transformed into a fiend incarnate.)

You horrid harpy! you witch! you hag!

You fallen woman! you ugly old bag!

This type of offence has become too rife,

So go to gaol for the rest of your life.

SCENE VI

King's Road. Enter JOE and PIXIE, hand in hand.

PIXIE: I wish we could find Uncle Godot again. I've nearly finished my SNURGE.

JOE: So do I. (Song: "Waiting for Godot," not printed in the expurgated edition.) Isn't it fabulous what SNURGE has done for us? Misery everywhere, and all our friends inside.

Reprise—"We're Happy"

JOE and PIXIE: We're dismal, yes so dismal—

How dismal can you get

As you watch the world go whirling

Round the cheerless Chelsea set?

PIXIE: Why don't we live together? In sin, of course.

JOE: Would it be all right?

PIXIE: Course it would.

Reprise—"Black and White"

PIXIE: Black and white Is always right,
It's frightfully old hat to make a fuss.

My people wouldn't mind a bit.

JOE: They wouldn't? Nor would mine;

They'd realize we're following the fashionable line;

BOTH: And { you'll
I'll } be Miss Cegenation of 1959.

It's the black and the white for us.

JOE: There's only one thing though.

PIXIE: What's that?

JOE: I don't really like girls.

Enter chorus of men-about town, models, layabouts, gamblers, teenagers, etc., etc.

Reprise—"Guilty"

CHORUS: We're guilty—so guilty;

We're up to the eyelids in sin;

When we look at the world, we're certain

That's the only way to fit in.

CURTAIN



Fables for Christmas Eve

"MY old man," said Timothy (eight), "used to put a glass of port on the mantelpiece in my room. It was for Santa, because Santa would be tired and thirsty when he reached our house, right across the Common. There was a mince pie too. Well, one Christmas I woke up and there were lots of lovely parcels at the foot of the bed, and I looked at the mantelpiece and the port and mince pie were still there.

"When my old man woke up (I woke him) the first thing he did was take some health salts and then he came in to see my toys. He looked straight at the mantelpiece and looked very surprised to find the pie gone and the glass empty. He put his face near mine and smelled my breath, silly old geezer, and then he said 'So Santa Claus did come after all!' and I said 'I'll say he did—look, he brought me a 203 engine just like I asked him.' We played with the train for a bit and then my old man started off round the room, looking for something. And at last he poked his head out of the window and saw the wine-stain on the concrete outside. He didn't say anything.

"Later when I had time to think it over I realized that without meaning to I'd hurt his feelings. That port had

been in the house *years* to my knowledge and wasn't fit to drink. (I tasted it.) No wonder Santa wouldn't touch it. And not having anything to wash it down with he didn't eat the pie either. I ate that. It was O.K."

"Parents are funny sometimes," said Thomas (seven). "I was looking through a magazine with my dad once and there was a picture of eight Santas, all in a row. Any fool could see that they were just *men* dressed up as Santa, but my dad became all hot and bothered and tried to explain the joke underneath the picture. He said Santa had a lot of helpers and they all looked like Santa because they came from the same country and belonged to the same ethnic group.

"Well, I wasn't swallowing that one, because I happened to know that Santa is black in Ghana and yellow in China, so I said pull the other one. So he went and told Mummy and they quarrelled and he said 'This is what comes of reading the *Statesman*,' and she said 'Phooey.' But we had a good Christmas after all and Santa gave me a space suit and a *Children's Encyclopædia*."

"My ma really is crazy," said Daphne (six). "Last Christmas when

I wrote my letter to Santa I asked for

- 1 doll
- 2 dresses for doll
- 1 chocolate bar
- 2 books
- 1 hula hoop and
- 1 anything you like.

"We sent the letter up the chimney and it went fine—whoosh! Sometimes it takes two or three goes to get it up, but this time it went up first time. Well, next morning when I came downstairs what did I see but the letter lying in the hearth. It was a bit sooty and charred and I picked it up and after a bit took it to my mum in the kitchen. She went white. 'That's torn it,' she said under her breath (but I heard her). 'No it hasn't,' I said; 'it's quite all right, only a bit dirty. Let's try again with the damper out.' She gave me a funny look and we repaired to the fireplace. This time it *really* went up and on Christmas day I got

- 1 doll
- 2 dresses for doll
- 1 chocolate bar
- 2 books
- 1 hula hoop and
- 1 set of dominoes.

And only Santa knew that I'd altered the last line to 1 set of dominoes."

"One Christmas Eve about six o'clock," said Alan (five), "my mother said 'Listen, I can hear Santa's sleigh-bells. He's coming. So we went to the door and listened. It was black-dark outside but I could hear the bells all right. They sounded very near and so I said 'I'd better go to bed at mach 1.' Just then there was a crash in the garden and I heard someone say blast. 'Where's father?' I said, and mother rushed me upstairs and into the bathroom. In the bath I kept asking mother where daddy was and she got cross. 'You know damn well where daddy is,' she said, 'so why keep on asking?' 'You'd think he'd be at home for once on Christmas Eve,' I said, 'especially when they've got an extension at the "Black Boy" until eleven o'clock.'

"My mother ducked my head under and when I came up gasping she said 'Johnny know-all!'

"All I said was: 'If father had been home with his torch Santa wouldn't have taken a purler across the rockery.'

"Then I went to bed and daddy came home at eleven-thirty and I went to sleep."

— BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



The Man who Didn't Come to Dinner

By H. F. ELLIS

ALL this was long ago. But at Christmastime one's thoughts turn naturally to other years, and my own tend to dwell on the time Dr. Frisby so nearly came to us. So very, very nearly. We never saw him, as the thing turned out, but his near-presence remained a vivid actuality with us for years—far more vivid than many a guest who has in fact arrived. We knew him, one might say, by the time he was definitely not coming, as well as one can ever hope to know a man who is neither a close friend nor a relative.

Dr. Frisby was wished upon us by some people in the next village. My mother took the call and, after an agonizing interval in which her off-stage cries of "Oh, you poor things! . . . *How* awkward! . . . My dear, of course! . . ." and "Not a bit of it. No trouble" warned us that something untoward was afoot, came running back with her bombshell that a Dr. Frisby, who was to have spent Christmas with the Millers, would be coming to us instead. They had to go north unexpectedly, she

explained—it was his old father, she thought, quite suddenly and mercifully in his sleep—and this Dr. Frisby could not possibly be put off. So Betty Miller . . .

"Why not?" my father asked. "It's a perfectly reasonable thing to put people off if people suddenly have to go north, willy nilly."

"Or west," my sister said.

"You shouldn't joke about it, Joan," my mother said, laughing gaily. "The trouble is it was all fixed up through some organization. And now of course they couldn't very well find anybody else to take him, even if they could get hold of him in time, which would be difficult because he isn't here yet, you see."

"That is the only thing I do see," my father said. "And if he were it would be too late, wouldn't it?"

"Not *here*, silly," my mother said.

"I think I know what Mother's trying to say," Joan said. "The Millers

must have told some organization that looks after visitors from overseas that they would like to entertain somebody for Christmas. Christmas in a real home. This Frisby was allotted to them and told where to go—

"Station. 11.45. Wearing a label," my mother put in.

"—and now they can't have him, so he's coming to us instead."

"Visitors from overseas, did you say," my father asked. "Where *from*, for goodness' sake? Who is this extraordinary person you propose to admit into our household, Mary?"

My mother said it was no good talking like that or trying to blame *her*. It was one of those things. How should she know where the man came from?

"Surely you asked?" my father said.

My mother said she doubted whether the Millers could have told her if she had. After all, they had never seen the man. "I expect he'll be from Canada," she added. "A Lutheran Minister, probably, over for some convention."

"Much more likely to be a Hindu philosopher," my father objected, "with a spinning wheel strapped to his back."

"I'm sure he will be very welcome," my mother replied with considerable dignity, "whatever his creed or colour. I should not have thought that at Christmas of all times—"

"Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes," my father said. "The point is, are Hindus allowed to eat goose?"

Nobody could tell him about that.

"It's all nonsense," Joan said. "The Millers would have said, otherwise. And look at his name. He'll turn out to be a jolly Scotch doctor, on leave from Singapore or somewhere."

"I agree with Mother," I said. "Almost certainly a D.D. Rather tall and thin. Speckled black suit, noticeable Adam's apple, and a tiny spot of blood on his stiff collar from a shaving cut. 'Ah'm from Winnipeg, ma'am. And may the Lord's blessing rest upon this house'."

"I don't think of him as much of a shaver," my mother said.

"Where's this tall, jolly, Lutheran Hindu from Singapore going to sleep?" asked my father suddenly.

"Sleep!" my mother cried. "Oh I don't think— At least, I took it it was just for the day."

"Well, that's one thing the Millers can tell us," I said, and I went straight off to telephone them. But I got no farther than the postmistress, who had seen them go by not more than a couple of minutes ago, with a suitcase in the back. "Heading north?" I asked, and she agreed. "It'll be on account of the telegram, as you'll likely know," she added. "What a sad thing, now!"

Christmas Eve was a troublesome kind of a day. There was the spare room to fix, in case Dr. Frisby brought a bag, and a great deal of argument about what would be suitable up there in the way of books and pictures. Joan clung to her genial broad-minded Scotsman, but neither my mother nor I could shake off our picture of a pretty straitlaced Lutheran minister, which hardened as the day wore on into positive Calvinism. My father, who thought the argument hopelessly off centre, advised us to try him with both barrels and pin up a page from *Esquire* with a text under it worked in wool. He himself persisted in his Eastern preconception, and from time to time asked my mother whether

she had plenty of rice in the house. It was impossible to make any orderly preparations at all. My mother, trotting off to hide the whisky in the cellar, would meet Joan coming up with an old dust-laden tandalus, which she felt was the kind of thing a Scots doctor liked to see about the place. I was told to remove my Wellingtons from the hat-place to leave room for the Doctor's galoshes, and my father, overhearing this, burst into roars of laughter and declared that a bowl of water for our guest to dip his feet into would be more useful. There was a long discussion about crackers. Joan and my father, who was now veering towards China, teamed up over this, but my mother feared some of the mottoes might give offence. A piece of mistletoe was hung up and taken down again a dozen times. I had a sudden thought and took some styptic up to the doctor's room, but somebody removed it later. My mother, recollecting that there were doctors of science, began to think in terms of Nobel prizewinners and, by an understandable confusion of thought, *smörgåsbord*. Then, when it was too late to do anything about it, she said wouldn't it be awful if he brought presents.

"I'm glad you didn't think of that earlier," my father said. "I shouldn't have cared to ask the village shop if they had anything suitable for a puritanical Brahmin of uncertain age with scientific leanings. I am tired of Dr. Frisby. He will have to take us as he finds us."

But he didn't have to do even that. At breakfast next morning my father, immensely casual, said "Oh by the way, Dr. Frisby rang up while you were all at church. The postmistress diverted the call here from the Millers'. Terribly sorry and all that, but can't make it. The ship docked very late."

"Well!" my mother said.

"Well?" I asked.

"Well what?"

"Oh go on," Joan said. "What is he? A Welsh Holy Roller from Saskatchewan?"

"That is not the kind of question one asks on the telephone," my father said. "All I can tell you for certain is that Dr. Frisby is a woman."

"Well anyway," my mother said, breaking a rather desolate silence, "I was right about not shaving. What a mercy I took that styptic out of her room."

Bless You, Tomasz Atkins!

A Polish journalist of that name has been convicted in Warsaw of currency offences.

POOR journalist, what made you pull
Your fiddle in imported wool,
Forsake your customary role
Of spreading truth from Pole to Pole,
And act instead as if you'd been a
Western Imperialist hyæna?

*Was it
Zloty a line,
All very fine,
But not much to live on, zloty a line?*

Or did your empire-building name
Incite you to this deed of shame,
Disposing you from birth to fancy a
Freer economy, if chancier,
In which a fellow could come close
To turning a dishonest grosz?

*Was it
Tommy this and Tommy that
And Tommy toe the line
That made you Tomasz Atkins
Number 40429?*

— PETER DICKINSON



Silline

A Man and his Socks

By MALCOLM BRADBURY

AFTER I had been teaching for some little time in an American university, one problem began to bulk a good deal larger than most. This was the problem of getting my clothes washed. I was reading, the other day, John Malcolm Brinnin's account of how Dylan Thomas, whilst rampaging about the American continent, would buy shirts by the dozen, to wear and discard; and I was reminded that, unbeknownst, and at about the same time, much the same sort of thing was happening to me in the sock world. Pretty much every Saturday morning I would shamble out of my room, where decaying socks clustered odiously together in the late summer heat, and

inveigle the men's stores in a certain mid-western town into parting with a weighty portion of their wares. Burdened with freshly-minted socks, I would return to my room and gaze hopelessly at the tattered relics of earlier weeks, now infinitely seedy, like something out of Graham Greene. For some time now I had been touring all the dime stores, seeking to purchase darning wool with which to repair them. But this was America, and darning wool was there none. In one of the stores, one day, I found an elderly lady who could just remember the days when they had had the kind of thing I wanted—cards of braided wool, concocted for just such a purpose, in the days when Americans did darn socks. But people no longer did this. They purchased new ones, and I had to do the same.

One day, however, I was thumbing through the student newspaper, gazing with quizzical eye on the photographs of the most popular bachelor of the week, the prettiest coed of the year, and so on, when a scrappy little advertisement caught my attention. It read, in its entirety, as follows:

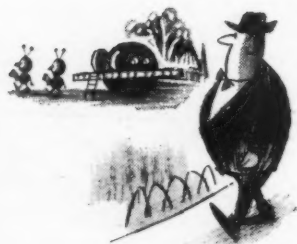
UGLIEST COED GETS MARRIED

Two pretty Sycamore Hall girls were starting to "bed down" last night. "How come your fall semester's room mate got married?" one asked. "You say she's got a face that would turn a pig's stomach?"

"And she has," came the answer. "But she's a corker of a knitter. All fall she kept going round there on Lincoln Street to East's Yarn Shop, getting Bear Brand sock yarn. She socked that guy so many times he didn't have any more sense than to propose."

"That gives me an idea," said the new room mate, folding away a brief.—(Adv.).

Quashing a sensation of horror at the gist of this unhappy prose, I set forth and shortly found myself in the Yarn Shop, which was the front room of a windswept dwelling house in a residential portion of the city, packed with such goodies as knitting needles, doilies and lengths of wool. After I had been there for about a quarter of an hour, opening and shutting the door to attract attention, a small, dapper man emerged from the living quarters and looked curiously at me. I spoke, and as soon as my accent exposed me as English he threw up his hands, charmed beyond words. "Pip, pip, old top," he said. He told me how much he loved England—the Queen, the Black Watch Regiment, Buckingham Palace, Notre Dame Cathedral. Ebullience sent him scurrying about the room like a cockroach. On learning that I was a teacher of English, with literary pretensions, facts which he wheedled out of me by unbroken persuasion, he went into a transport of glee, and, diving into the rear room, returned with a sheaf of poems which he had indited. He told me that he was a frustrated writer, a fact that, had I not been of wilful disposition, might have killed my literary ambitions in an instant, and that his verse had been published in, among other places, *The Draper's Gazette* and *The Corseteer's Quarterly*. The poems were all about the American Civil War and a large majority of them appeared to begin with the line: "Tramp, tramp, tramp..." He then produced a volume



of clippings, most of which were devoted to advertisements of the sort already cited and of which he was extraordinarily proud. I took advantage of a pause to tell him about the socks business. Scarcely pausing in his discourse, he went about the room, clipping short pieces off the balls and lengths of wool that adorned all its corners, and these he presented to me. It took but the rest of the afternoon for me to make my escape.

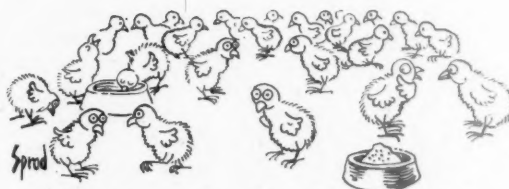
Unfortunately this was only a temporary alleviation; the wool ran out, the socks piled up, and I did not dare return to the yarn store. Finally the time came to find some means of getting rid of my dirty, discarded socks. Eventually you might have seen me, late at night, venturing out and dropping them on the railroad tracks, where they would somehow get caught up in the expresses and taken clean through to Chicago.

Socks were not all; I was beginning to look very tatty over-all. My jacket started to sliver. Unaccustomed to looking after myself, I felt perplexed and frightened by the extraordinary accumulation of linen that was piling up in my wardrobe. Finally I resolved to wash the horrible stuff myself. There was, on the campus, a scrappy, damp little basement, filled with coin-operated washing machines, and one night I trooped thither with a large bundle of clobber. I found an empty machine, inserted my coins, and peered in hopelessly through the glass while the machine made them into a soggy, turgid mass of linen, knotted violently together. I had forgotten to put in any soap-flakes, or to separate whites from coloureds, or do any of the simple things that are common knowledge to all who have ever skimmed through the

instructions on a packet of soap powder. When I took my things out they all seemed as dirty as ever; one thing, however, had come of it—they had all changed colour. White shirts were red, blue shirts were purple. I gathered it all together and went, frightened, away.

Some days later I slunk back again. Something had to be done. I noticed a pretty girl at the next machine and I asked her to explain the whole seedy process. I hid my beastly clothes behind my back. She told me about the soapflakes. She made me show her the clothes, sort them into categories so that they wouldn't stain each other, and put them properly into the machine. We stood and watched it. I said I was unmarried and inexperienced in this sort of thing. She said she was unmarried too. We talked a bit more and then decided to go into town, to the movies. I didn't think about the clothes again until two days later and when I went back to the washroom I found someone had dumped them on the floor. They were very dirty and frozen solid.

Not yet defeated, I decided after some cogitation to offer them, with profound apologies, to the local laundry, which claimed to solve such problems. But the Kwickie Washee, as it was called, was startlingly unfamiliar with that kind of English shirt which has loose collars. When the shirts came back, the front had been hardened by starch to the consistency of cement, and the collars were so stiff that I had to bend



"I happen to know she's TWO days old."

them back into shape round a coffee percolator. To make things worse, the shirts came back in a Cellophane packet, pinned up and fixed on a cardboard back, with a little wrapper around, and on the wrapper it said, odiously: GOOD MORNING, SIR! YOUR CLEAN SHIRT, COURTESY OF THE KWICKIE WASHEE. After a few mornings of this, I became so infuriated with the legend that I resolved to trade with another laundry. When I unbundled their offering, I turned to the wrapper with much of the trepidation of the occasional gambler, fumbling with the racing edition of the evening newspaper. The wrapper this time said, pithily: HAVE YOU KISSED YOUR WIFE TO-DAY?

I sat on my bed and keened to myself for a moment. After I grew calmer, I was possessed with a desire to return to England, where the laundries, although they take three times as long and spend the extra interval crushing the buttons of your garments to powder, at least give them back to you in a stout cardboard box, on which you must pay ten shillings if it is lost.



A CRISIS OVER

THERE have been bad shocks in British homes this week. Was it in yours that a gaily-wrapped tea-trolley turned up, from the old friend whose address you couldn't find? This is an emergency. Show your mettle. Deal with it in a flash by sending the late well-wisher PUNCH for a year. Or, rather, send us his address, now you've got it—and we will. Together with a Greetings Card. Subscriptions: Great Britain and Eire £2 16s.; Canada (By Canadian Magazine Post) £2 10s. (\$7.25); Elsewhere Overseas £3 (U.S.A. \$9.00). Write to: Department ED., PUNCH, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4. U.S.A. and Canadian readers may remit by cheques on their own banks. Other overseas readers should consult their bankers or remit by postal money order.

Man in Apron

by *Larry*



The Universal Cud

By E. S. TURNER

LAST year, according to dispatches, the American people consumed 250 million pounds of chewing-gum, an average of 200 pieces for every man, woman and child.

Two points are worth making at the outset. The American people may have bought 250 million pounds of gum and chewed it, but they did not, unless inadvertently, *consume* it. Much of it, one suspects, is still adhering to urban under-surfaces.

The other point is that it is misleading to average out the demand over the population. In the past statisticians have shown that three-quarters of the

gum chewed in America is chewed by one-tenth of the population.

This champing tenth ought to be the most relaxed and eupeptic section of any community. For four years, through the mounting stresses of the late 1930s, Professor Harry L. Hollingworth, a psychologist of Columbia University, investigated the psycho-dynamics of gum-chewing. He wrote: "The collateral motor automatism involved in the sustained use of the conventional masticatory does result in a lowering of tension and the tension thus reduced is muscular." Lowering of tension does not mean dissipation of energy, for

Professor Hollingworth found that writers who chewed gum pressed harder on their pencils (a development, one feels, of questionable value) and typists typed faster. In elucidation of this theme a manufacturer has since pointed out that when a person chews, part of his excess energy is often added to the main job in hand.

A relevant point made by the *New York Times* was that while the gum chewer might find a release of tension the sight of his rhythmic rumination was apt to build up tension in the unwilling observer.

What we need now, and have long

needed, is a psychologist who will tell us why our intake of gum in Britain is notably lower than that of America. Are our tensions so much less—or are our social prejudices so much greater? We have taken nearly everything else from America; why do so many of us strain at gum? Why do we prefer to scourge ourselves with false thirst? Why do we not fight boredom and dental caries simultaneously? And is it not part of our imperial duty to keep British Honduras prosperous?

The manufacturers have done their tactful best to educate us. Let us hope there are none who, on reading the advertisement, "Your children's teeth can get the exercise they need from apples, raw vegetables, and from chewing gum," would be so ungrateful as to go out and buy their children merely apples and raw vegetables.

Such prejudices against gum-chewing as exist in Britain are not wholly confined to teachers, magistrates, clergymen and sergeant-majors. In 1947 Earl Howe, in the House of Lords, went to some pains to discover whether, and if so why, Britain was importing chewing gum from America. He was told that to reject imports of chewing gum base would mean quite unjustifiable discrimination against those who preferred to use gum instead of tobacco; it would also mean discrimination against coal-miners. His lordship then admitted that he himself liked to chew gum in aircraft, or when he felt seasick, or when engaged in motor racing; thus leaving his hearers rather mystified as to why he had raised the question.

In the following year it looked as though chewing gum might engage the attention of the United Nations. The Social Committee of the Economic and Social Council had conducted a long debate on the ramifications of cocoa-leaf chewing in South America, and had decided to send a team to investigate its effects. At this point Leroy D. Stinebower, of the United States, "jocosely" suggested that the Committee might wish to investigate chicle-chewing in North America. The proposal strongly appealed to Ivan Kamenev, of the Soviet Union, who said he was sure that any time the United States asked for such an investigation a mission could be formed to undertake it.

There is adequate evidence that the Communist leaders regard gum-chewing

as one of the all-too-visible (and even all-too-audible) signs of western decadence. In 1951 an attempt was made to ban the practice in East Germany and in East Berlin. Two years ago Czechoslovakia relented sufficiently to permit the manufacture of twenty tons of edible gum, but only so that coal-miners might have an alternative from chewing tobacco or tar. So far as is known, no citizens of Moscow were disciplined for accepting gum from Vice-President Nixon.

Mildly facetious legend hangs about the origins of chicle-chewing in America (with chicle may, or may not, be incorporated perillo, jelutong, chiquibul, katiou and massandaruba). Early last century the chewing public which did not favour tobacco chewed spruce resin to such an extent that the spruce supply was seriously embarrassed. In 1866 General Santa Anna, a Mexican presidential candidate, offered a hunk of his native chicle to one Thomas Adams Jr. Instead of chewing it, Adams took it away and tried to vulcanize it, in the hope of using it to make plates for false teeth. The material defied the vulcanizer's efforts, and in the end the experts agreed that it deserved no better fate than to be chewed. Adams put it on the market almost unflavoured. Its purchasers chewed it for sheer love of chewing. Gradually, the public were

weaned from spruce and tobacco to chicle; just as, in later years, some portion of the inhabitants of India and Malaya were diverted to chicle from betel-nut.

By the century's end manufacturers were scrambling for any cheap product which could be mass-produced, sold cheaply, and quickly worn out or thrown away. William Wrigley Jr. added improved flavours to chicle and advertised it on a heroic scale. So did his rivals. Swiftly the American public grew to recognize that gum was not merely something to chew but a substance that helped digestion, cleaned the teeth, sweetened the breath, sharpened the wits, aided concentration, steadied motorists' nerves and saved marriages from dissolution. "Everyone in town said that cop was unfair," ran one advertisement, "and then he found this way to end his indigestion." Hostesses were urged to lay a stick of gum beside their guests' dinner plates, lest they suffer from "logginess" after meals.

Writers of etiquette books were forced to come to terms with the gum habit. In the 1928 edition of her *Blue Book Emily Post* wrote: "It is scarcely necessary to add that no gentleman walks along the street chewing gum..." In the 1955 edition this sentence has been omitted. Instead one reads: "It



"It's not fair! You made the tea last Christmas morning."

is still impossible to imagine a lady walking in a city street and either chewing gum or smoking. Nor does a gentleman walk with a lady in a city street and at the same time smoke." From this it may be inferred that a gentleman may now chew in a lady's company, in the street. But did Miss Post really mean this?

Earthier pundits on etiquette have concentrated on telling people not to chew with their mouths open and to refrain from leaving the exhausted cud on pavements or subway seats.

That the latter advice was necessary was shown by Mayor LaGuardia's campaign in 1939 to arrest the gum-fall in New York. Owners of bars and cinemas regarded the de-gumming of their premises as part of their normal overheads, but the Mayor did not see why hundreds of thousands of dollars a year should be spent scraping the oozings of Yucatan from the side-walks of Manhattan. At his request manufacturers urged patrons to keep the wrapper as a blanket for the gum when no longer required. Various slogans were hatched, among them "Don't Gum Up the Works" and "Chew It, But Don't Strew It." A cynic said that no improvement could be expected unless chewers were offered some small financial reward for each surrendered piece of gum.

The second world war proved afresh that the world intake of gum increases

spectacularly in times of crisis. Like the Doughboy of the earlier war, the G.I. spread the habit in less privileged lands. A modest portion of the gum output was used to plug up holes in aircraft petrol tanks and in riddled flying boats. In American war factories, notably those in which smoking was not allowed, managements certified that an issue of gum to workers cut down those man-hours which otherwise would have been consumed by trips to the drinking fountain. Some went so far as to say that the gum issue made for more harmonious industrial relations.

In 1943 a supply of gum was dropped by American bombers for the children of Paris, as a token of delights to come. Two years later the world read how a London police horse became snarled up by gum given to it by an American soldier during VJ-Day celebrations. Soon afterwards chewing-gum became one of Europe's more stable black market currencies.

Technically the manufacturers continue to make all kinds of advances. Gum has been impregnated with everything from sulphur to fluorine, from chlorophyll to penicillin. There is also laxative gum. In 1954 a leading manufacturer told his shareholders that his company had been striving hard to invent a gum which would not adhere to false teeth. No answer had yet been found, but instead the company was developing the next best thing—a

plastic denture that would not stick to chewing gum. When perfected, this would be handed over as a gift to humanity.

But Norris C. Leonard, of Nashville, Tennessee, still pursued the Philosopher's Stone of a non-adhesive quid. In 1956 he took out Patent No. 2,761,782 in respect of a silicone gum which, he claimed, would not embarrass wearers of artificial teeth. The patronage of the dentured public is obviously one of the glittering prizes of industry and Mr. Leonard's claim is not likely to have gone unexamined. It is fair to say that many wearers of dentures are able to chew gum without trouble; but the problem will not vanish until all populations realize that, by chewing the right gum (or the right foods) indefatigably in early life they will never need false teeth.

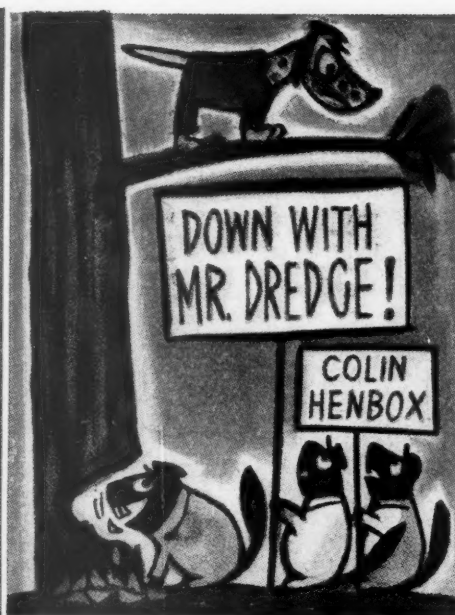
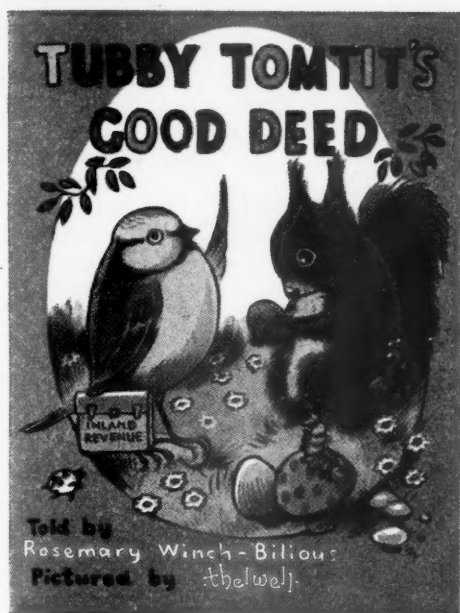
Bubble-gum is another story. It became intensely popular as soon as children realized how much it infuriated their parents. Its annals are enlivened by entries like these: "Children popping gum disrupt film showing"; "Blower demonstrating skill causes three-car crash"; "Company planning to open fish-canning plant on Tristan da Cunha sends bubble-gum gift to inhabitants"; and "Mosholu Community Council day camp children dramatize anti-inflation fight in playlet on bubble-gum prices." When the craze was at its height American children began to suffer from mysterious headaches and sore throats, and the United States Food and Drug Administration was goaded by parents into investigating bubble-gum. Its experts set 75 persons chewing for periods up to eight hours; they fed bubble-gum to monkeys; they attached wads of chewed gum to shaved rabbits; they implanted it in guinea-pigs. In the end, regretfully, they had to acquit it of harmful effects.

While bubble-gum was stimulating much unseemly enterprise, misguided chewers of the conventional masticatory showed that they, too, could still break into the headlines. Five years ago Clyde ("Mighty Mouth") McGehee won the biggest-cud stakes by chewing 165 sticks into a mass and keeping it in motion for ten hours.

The manufacturers were not amused. Nobody's digestion needs 165 sticks between meals. The winner's quid, when stretched, reached for 39 feet.



"I sent my compliments to HIM?"



For the Thinking Toddler

This year, for the first time, Christmas books for younger children have broken away from tradition. The selection on these pages shows how even the tot's library can prepare him for life in the world of to-day

Tubby Tomtit's Good Deed, by Rosemary Biliou

EVEN parents will fall in love with Tubby, the kind-hearted income-tax inspector who cannot bring himself to accept the last nut of Squire Squirrel, and pays the penalty of his indulgence by being dismissed the service. A telling scene in chapter five, where Tubby declines to give evidence at the Squire's bankruptcy proceedings, strikes a note of real pathos. All ends happily, as Tubby is set up in business as a tax-adjuster by grateful members of the animal public, marries the Squire's daughter, Bertha Bluetit, and fathers a lively clutch of rebates.

How Hubert Hit the Headlines, by Ian Drambuie

Hubert Halibut, an out-of-work public relations officer, gets his big chance when William Whale employs him in an ocean-wide campaign against bad conditions in blubber-processing factories. At first Hubert is filled with self-doubts, but, aided by Orlando Octopus, a shrewd old squid, he puts not only blubber-processing but public relations on the map. This well-informed story introduces the young

reader to the great world of organized publicity, its hopes and fears, its triumphs and disappointments. Hubert is a fine person, for a fish, and the author, who has worked for the National Coal Board, writes with feeling and perception. (*Foreword by the Duke of Bedford.*)

Ronnie Rock Wins Through, by Ernest String

Popular music had to find its way on to the knee-high bookshelves, and here is the cautionary tale of a teenage vole called Ronnie, who finds a tiny plastic guitar among some cracker-débris and decides to bring Rock to the wildwood. His rise to fame and its alarming effect on his character provide the material for a stirring yarn. There is a splendid portrait of ruthlessness in Mr. Fox, Ronnie's bushy-tailed manager.

Down with Mr. Dredge! by Colin Henbox

Subtly, this well-thought-out tale highlights the whole structure of trade unionism, as the hero, industrious Bertie Beaver, rallies his workmates to resist Dick Dredge, a wicked

Dalmatian shop-steward, in his scheme to bring them all out on strike as a vital dam is nearing completion. Dramatic, sometimes frightening, this book is recommended for older children.

Fun at Fourways, by Capt. E. H. Pindler

Fourways is an approved school for animal delinquents, where we follow the high-spirited adventures of such rich characters as Sam Swordfish, Bertie Bison and a cuddly amoeba named Jean-Pierre; all are cosh-boys, and Sam stabbed his father. The Warden, a whimsical python, is bound to become a classical character in juvenile literature.

Baron Badger's Last Bid, by Rupert Sharkey

Baron Badger, a typical tycoon, owns almost the whole of Rat's Rents, a rich area of derelict cowsheds on the borders of Snowdrop Spinney. One more takeover and he will be in the Spinney itself. Only Hamilton Hedgehog is alive to the danger, and it is of his struggle to mobilize animal opinion in a last stand against the tyrant that the author tells so vividly. Many cleverly-drawn characters emerge, not least Wilberforce Weasel, who was once in the finance business himself, and in the end helps to make the Baron see that money in the bank means nothing without love in the heart. A beautiful story, yet never sentimental, which is already the talk of the Stock Exchange.

Tilly of the Telly, by Lady Hannah Burstfoot

For the first time the new and exciting communications medium provides the setting for a children's story. Tilly, the glamorous panel-game Titmouse and idol of millions of little viewing creatures over the whole Nature Network, has worked hard for her fame. When she finds that her fellow panellists include her sworn enemies, Godfrey Gorilla and Annabelle Adder, she sees her hard-won ratings slipping. Luckily, she has a staunch friend in Stanley Stoat, the studio manager, and just as transmission begins . . . But this is one you *must* read for yourselves.



Cloudland Prue, by Dag Bruiser

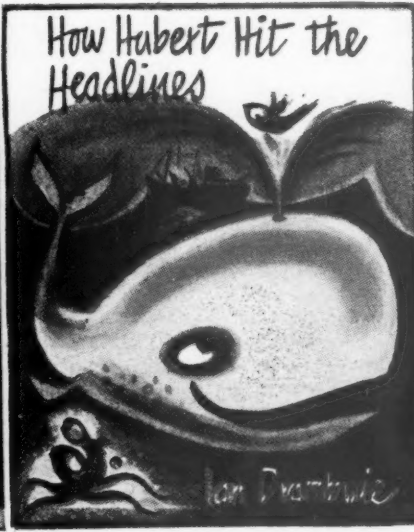
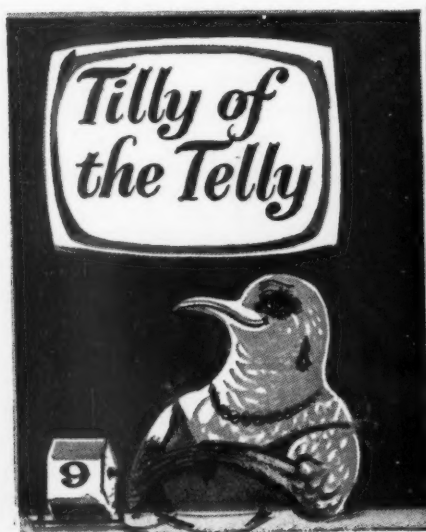
All little career girls will thrill to this exciting adventure of Prudence Peewit, resourceful young stewardess in a jetliner loaded with feathered migrants. When one of them is revealed as Sergei Swallowoff, a Moscow undercover man, who drugs the pilot, Captain Cuckoo, and attempts to take control of the 'plane, all Prue's feminine charm and political intuition are brought into play. (Adapted from a number of films.)

Journalist Jim's High Jinks, by William Wookey

Jim is a tenacious tapir. "His nose for news was *ju-u-ust* the right shape for pushing through knot-holes in fences . . ." But Jim nosed out more news than he knew when he scented scandal at Newsprint Manor. To tell how he hid under Lord Spider's bed; and so found himself painfully torn between getting the scoop of the century and exposing his own employer's intrigue with the fascinating Florence Fly would be to spoil the plot.

Croc, M.P., by E. Keystone Purvinger, B.E.M.

Political fun is piled high in this chronicle of E. B. Crocodile and his agent, Colonel Cat, and rises to a climax with their highly dubious victory in the South Cope by-election. The perceptive young reader will see, in "E.B.'s" tearful maiden speech about the damming of Tinkling Brook, some interesting satirical sidelights on Suez. (Note the "brushed-up eyebrows and whiskers" of Mr. McMole, the P.M.!)



I Shot an Arrow into the Air

By MONICA FURLONG

OR to be more precise, my arrow shot itself into the air. But I am beginning at the wrong end.

Often when I am lunching out in one of those big vulgar restaurants, all mirrors and marble marquetry, I catch a glimpse of a woman who interests me very much. She is young and passably pretty, and a certain amount of intelligence informs her large, moon face, making her look like a Persian cat with brains. She has a hearty appetite, drinks usually within but occasionally beyond the bounds of propriety, and monopolizes conversations as a matter of course. She worries too, like anything. Above the apparently peaceful eyes her eyebrows are permanently clipped together over a Grand Canyon of anxiety, and her mouth in repose sets grimly waiting for disaster to break out.

I worry at other times too (I was speaking of myself, of course. I wouldn't write all that stuff about some other woman) with the responsible tension of someone who knows that if she relaxes her hold on the world for even a minute the valve may come out and reduce the whole thing to the size of a wizened-up balloon. Navvies often call out to me in the street "Cheer up, ducks. It's not as bad as that," and people like stationwomen and newspaper sellers say "Don't worry. It may never happen." (Of-all the stupid, fatuous remarks. I once thought of a cartoon in which someone was saying "Don't worry. It may never happen." Unknown to them a huge thunderbolt was about to strike the house.)

One day, though, I was at a party and trying to play one of those barmy games. Spinning the plate I think it was. I wasn't getting along too well (despite tremendous application) when a big, ginger man who had been watching came across the room and offered to tell me what I was doing wrong. "The trouble is," he said, "you're trying too hard. Because you are tense you are tightening up the muscles of your arm so that you can't use them properly. Let the plate spin itself." Before I could stop him or utter so much as a yawn he had launched into a long exposition of the works of Suzuki, which included the whole theory of the archer and the arrow. "Let the arrow

shoot itself," he said, "let it choose its own moment," and explained that the arrow must loose itself from the bow as naturally and inevitably as the apple drops from the bough.

I took his advice to heart. Nowadays, for example, I never attempt to do the washing-up until the dirty dishes (with just a little help from my husband) put themselves into the hot water and remove their coats of gravy and bacon fat. I make no attempt to change the sheets or brush the carpets until the ripeness of time makes these processes as inevitable as tea flowing from an overturned cup or soot avalanching down an unswept chimney. If I ever turn the mattress or do the dusting it is as unconsidered a gesture as a corn stalk bowing under its burden, or the wind whipping sand along a tousled beach. When I emerge to do my shopping it is with the easy stride of a lioness stalking an antelope.

Don't you think so picturesque a doctrine might have a national application? For instance, mightn't it be possible to persuade political leaders in future that election campaigns are a waste of time, since in any case votes

will slide into the ballot-box with the spontaneity of a tomato into a candidate's face? Parliament will open as naturally and sweetly as a rose, and legislation will drop into the laps of the electorate as surely as over-ripe plums. Words will spill from the lips of M.P.s like water from a washerless tap, and Governments will fall as sharply as coffin lids. Would-be strikers will wait patiently for the moment of interior impulse, and newspaper presses will stand idle until the leader-writers' typewriters begin to pound of their own volition. A strange sight will be gossip columnists waiting for scandal to break under its own impetus. Art will probably flourish, with a thousand ballpoints pinning down tiny, exquisite fragments of poetry and brushes capturing ineffable impressions of cherry blossoms and chrysanthemums under snow.

And me? How am I getting on under this exciting new way of life? Not too well, I'm afraid. Apart from the strain of thinking up similes all the time I worry badly over trying not to try hard. Like an anxious European doing an imitation of a relaxed Japanese practising Zen? I'm afraid so.



"That's the last time I let you buy the Christmas tree presents."

Double-Seven: How is ou

PEOPLE

1. By what names would you more readily recognize the following:
(a) Lord Greystoke, (b) Dolores Haze, (c) Kimball O'Hara, (d) Philip Pirip, (e) Simon Templar, (f) Mrs. Cripps, (g) Natty Bumppo, (h) Robert Paterson?
2. At whose Courts were the following jesters employed:
(a) Rahere, (b) Scoggin, (c) Rigoletto, (d) Will Sommers, (e) Archie Armstrong, (f) Muckle John?
3. What British monarchs lurk behind the following *noms de guerre*:
(a) Florizel, (b) Belphebe, (c) Mrs. Morley, (d) Gloriana, (e) Old Rowley?

THINGS

4. One in each of the following sets is an "intruder": which?
(a) Mogul, Mikado, Emperor, Consolidated, Pacific
(b) *Punch*, *Fun*, *The Man in the Moon*, *Gallimaufry*, *Lika Joko*
(c) Sprod, Thelwell, Anton, Scully, Larry
(d) Titan, Iapetus, Pluto, Phobos, Europa
(e) Marty Wilde, Adam Faith, Cliff Richard, Elvis Presley, Tommy Steele.
5. What familiar things are described in heraldry as a:
(a) popinjay, (b) lucy, (c) martel, (d) colomb, (e) camelopard?
6. In what games might you expect to hear someone speak of:
(a) a chase, (b) a meld, (c) bad calx, (d) a quint, (e) furking?

TWINS

7. Distinguish between:
(a) a lustrum and a sistrum
(b) a caltrap and a cantrip
(c) a picayune and a picaroon
(d) a matrass and a matross
(e) a biretta and a Beretta

TRIPLETS

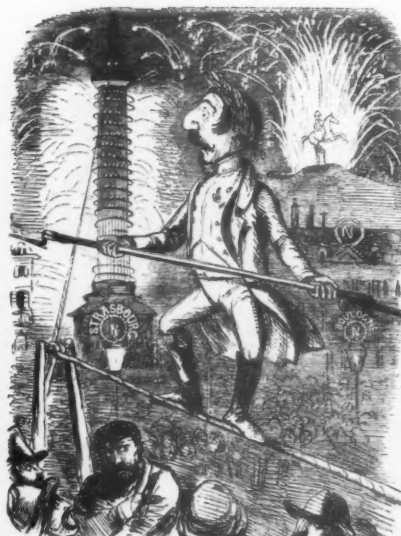
8. Three persons of the same surname, real or imaginary, are listed below:
(i) (a) One of a jolly quartet
(b) Poor man's Holmes
(c) Innocent though experienced singer
(ii) (a) Could his novels be called pot-boilers?
(b) He wrote for the piano
(c) Almost a gentleman
(iii) (a) His hero was shut up
(b) His gags are free
(c) Lifeless but beautiful she lay
(iv) (a) Romancer of the north
(b) Explorer of the south
(c) "All Greek to him" was no handicap
(v) (a) Heath was his hero
(b) An admiral's best friend
(c) One of a footwear fellowship
(vi) (a) Portrayer of feathers
(b) Surveyor of frontiers
(c) Purveyor of food
(vii) (a) Dealer in science fiction
(b) Dealer in the supernatural
(c) Dealer in furs

Pictures

14. *Punch* was published for six decades of the last century. One cartoon here re



CARRYING THE CORN . . .



TERRIFIC ASCENT OF THE HERO OF A HUNDRED FETES



THE LION OF THE SEASON
Alarmed Flunkey. "Mr. G-G-G-O-O-O-RILLA!"

is our Useless Knowledge?

- (viii) (a) Essayist of high spirits
(b) Climber of the heights
(c) Painter of lofty themes
- (ix) (a) Playwright who had a long run
(b) Aircraftman's alias
(c) Faithful fireman
- (x) (a) Classic athlete
(b) Poetic playwright
(c) The Quaker Girl

PARTY-GOING

9. These two Christmas parties went off badly; the guests paired off inseparably and wouldn't mix. Introductions were clearly called for; but which of them did *not* need introducing?
 - (a) (a very aristocratic operatic party). Lord Henry Ashton, Princess von Werdenberg, Flora Bervoix, Kate Pinkerton, Kunz Vogelgesang, Count Refrano, Suzuki (*not D. T. Suzuki the Zen writer; this is a lady*), Conrad Nachtigall, Dr. Grenvil, Lord Arthur Bucklow
 - (b) (an adventurous, faintly artistic party). Charlie Brown, James Bond, Harris Tweed, Bodger, Garth, Marco Polo, Curls—Master of Satire, Florrie Capp, Jeff Hawke, Desmond.

YESTERDAY

10. Who on earth were:
 - (a) Cohn and Schine, (b) Layton and Johnson, (c) Moran and Mack, (d) Mrs. Meyrick, (e) The Rev. Basil Andrews?
11. Who the devil can have said:
 - (a) The greatest danger to peace is war, (b) A peaceful

world is not possible if people resort to war; (c) What we wish above all for the coming year is never to pronounce the words war, battle, combat and victims, (d) We have thirty-five years' supply of tinned hamburgers, (e) There are no organized gangs in Soho?

12. Whatever became of:
 - (a) *Illustrated*, (b) *Picture Post*, (c) *The Leader*, (d) *Truth*, (e) *John o' London's*?

INTERROGATIVE

13. (i) *Who . . .*
 - (a) Was Mrs. Grundy?
 - (b) Said "The poor have but one duty, which is to impose on the rich"?
 - (c) Was the first woman to swim the English Channel?
- (ii) *What . . .*
 - (a) Is an izzet?
 - (b) Went from Greenwich to Herstonceux?
 - (c) Was the capital of Lilliput?
- (iii) *Where . . .*
 - (a) Did the bee suck?
 - (b) Did the Beaufort Scale get its name?
 - (c) Is the original Temple Bar?
- (iv) *When . . .*
 - (a) I was a king in Babylon what were you?
 - (b) Did the Russians launch their first earth satellite?
 - (c) Did clothes rationing end?

Answers on page 650

ne cartoon were reprinted from each decade, in the right order. To what do they refer?



"NEW CROWNS FOR OLD ONES!"
Aladdin Adapted



"TOO LATE!"



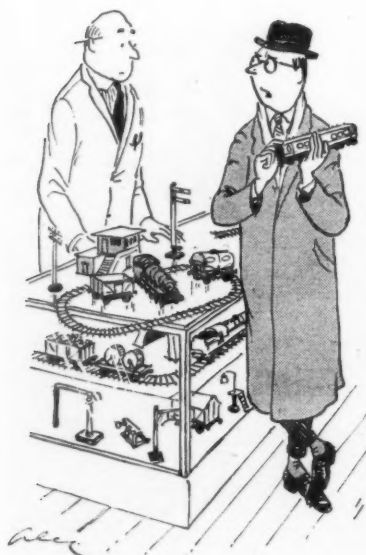
"CROSSING THE BAR"

Into Something Rich and Strange

By T. S. WATT

WHENEVER I read of some of these unusually adventurous productions of Shakespeare, I am reminded of old days with the West Pennine Players, of our producer, Mr. Cobbold, and of the impact made on our callow and ignorant minds by his opulent fancy and daring innovations. In particular I think of his bow-legged Othello.

The principal weakness in *Othello*, Mr. Cobbold explained to us, lay in Shakespeare's complete failure to devise some means of enlisting the audience's sympathy for his hero right from the very beginning. "First," Mr. Cobbold said, "he turns out to be a general, and there are not many who will like him any the better for that. Next, he is found to be extremely talkative, another bad point. Add to this a miserably touchy temper, a tendency to fall down in fits, and an almost pathological stupidity, and it is quite obvious that whatever ridiculous imbroglio the wretched fellow gets himself into, no one is going to care twopence—a handicap under which a play should never have to labour. At the least, therefore, something must be done to awaken our sympathetic concern for Othello at his very first entrance, and I suggest a conspicuous physical disability."



"How old is what child?"

Mr. Cobbold explained that the disability must not be so severe as to be incapacitating, such as a bad attack of sciatica or lumbago, since Othello's duties as a general would demand a certain agility—probably a good deal more than would be called for in modern times. On the other hand, anything of so slight a nature as a cold in the head would fail to arouse sufficient sympathy, besides introducing a jarring note into the more sombre scenes. Chronic dyspepsia would not do, because the text must not be tampered with so as to let Othello interpolate a few comments on his condition, nor could the audience get wind of the thing in any other way, for various reasons which Mr. Cobbold explained. The only disability which was exactly right, according to Mr. Cobbold, was bow-leggedness, and our leading actor was ordered to begin simulating this deformity at rehearsals.

I am inclined to think that the idea would have been better received to-day. A well-known actress quite recently attempted something of the kind, and her gait was much admired by a leading critic—"a marvellous waddle," he called it. I only wish we had had a critic of similar discernment at our opening performance, instead of an ill-informed oaf who could do no better than "Mr. Barker's Othello was a gallant struggle against a distressing physical infirmity." It may be that Barker tried to do too much. At times he appeared to be walking well-nigh on the outsides of his knee-caps, and his exits with Desdemona gave rise to an occasional titter.

This was not of course by any means Mr. Cobbold's only innovation. I well remember his brilliant attempt to bring out the humour in *Macbeth*, and here I must say that I think he was far ahead of his modern counterparts in this particular field. Only a few weeks ago I read of the introduction of four Great Danes into *Othello*—"an amusing touch," it was considered. It may perhaps be so. I myself, if sheer fun were to be the object, would have been inclined to look to old English sheep-dogs for my laughs, but humour is a mysterious thing, and it well may be that to some members of the audience

the Great Dane would appear the more comical breed.

One of the most richly humorous parts of *Macbeth*, Mr. Cobbold told us, was where the messenger brings the news that Birnam Wood is beginning to move. We were unable to see this at first, but we soon did when Mr. Cobbold explained it. Here was Macbeth, he said, subjected to vexation after vexation—Banquo's ghost at the party, Fleance's escape, the evasiveness of the witches, Lady Macbeth's death—and now comes this new blow. "You'll be familiar with the Laurel and Hardy comedies?" said Mr. Cobbold. "Everything happens to Hardy. You'll see him, perhaps, half buried under a pile of crockery, probably with a bucket of whitewash upended over his head, his face perfectly impassive, no movement except for a meditative drumming of the fingers. Then suddenly he throws everything off and rushes at Laurel. You know the sort of thing?"

We said we did, wondering how all this tied up with Macbeth.

"Now there," said Mr. Cobbold, banging his fist on the table, "you have the perfect lead-in to Macbeth's 'Liar and slave!' Let Mr. Barker put that frantic outburst on top of a full minute's pensive finger-tapping and tranquil meditation, and by heavens, we'll get a laugh that'll break every window from here to John o' Groats!"

Again I think the thing was overdone. After Mr. Cobbold had finished tinkering with it the passage read:

MESSENGER: . . . methought the wood began to move.

(MACBETH convulsively hunches shoulders, draws hissing breath through bared teeth, screws up eyes, as though stung by a wasp.)

MACBETH: Began to move?

MESSENGER: Yes, began to move.

(MACBETH walks deliberately to a table, draws up a chair, sits down facing audience, stares thoughtfully in front of him, drumming fingers on table.)

MACBETH: Liar and slave! (Leaps up and rushes at MESSENGER.)

I happened to be the messenger, and I thought Barker would never have finished drumming his fingers. There were quite a few laughs when he jumped at me, but not enough for Mr. Cobbold.

As They Might Have Been

VI LADY LEWISHAM

*THE bells chime urgently by County Hall
To Raine, the loveliest Councillor of them all.
What do they tell her, as she listens there?
Turn again, Lewisham! perhaps, one day, Lord
Mayor*



Cosmetics in My Life

By PATRICK RYAN

I WAS hanging around my wife's dressing-table the other day, trying to find out where she keeps her money, when I had the fear put straight up me by a can of hair-spray.

It was a pretty red tin modestly labelled "Greatest Scientific Advance—Two Years Ahead." Ahead of what, it didn't say, but I supposed women knew.

Press the valve firmly, the instructions said, and once you've sprayed your hair "It can't go limp . . . It stays alive . . . It can't fly away."

My hair has been flying away since I was sixteen and I am now so bald that Yul Brynner is suing me. So I gave myself a quick blow-over with the Greatest Scientific Advance before anyone came up and caught me.

It didn't bring any hair alive but it gave my deserted bonce a lovely surface-sheen. Another coat, a buffing with a silk handkerchief and you could have shaved yourself in it. Or hired me out as a human heliograph.

I was shaping for the top-coat when I noticed the last of the instructions.

"Avoid Spraying Near the Eyes—Do Not Use Near Fire or Flame—

Keep Away from Excessive Heat—Do Not Incinerate Container."

I put the can down before it blew up or blinded me. It was the last doom-ridden warning that did for me. "Do Not Incinerate Container." Even as a dead man that hair-spray could still blow you over the compost heap. I realized then that what that stuff was Two Years Ahead of was the hydrogen bomb.

I looked along the serried ranks of cosmetics on the dressing-table and reflected on the dangers women brave to please the male. Every other jar in that array had a label telling you to stand well back, son. Given half a pint of botulinus toxin we'd be all set for germ warfare.

My wife may not have bought all the cosmetics but she's certainly done my bit to keep Elizabeth Arden in race-horses and Helena Rubinstein in portraits. In our time we must have invoked every aid to beauty short of burning candles to Venus or making human sacrifice to Aphrodite.

Of all the treatments favoured by my wife and her coffee-mates there is none more popular and fraught with danger than the face-pack. In our house we've grown so accustomed to people walking about with their faces varnished into disapproval by egg-white, fuller's earth, or ground arrowroot that my daughter, when in trouble on the distaff side, always checks before wasting apologies. "Are you cross with me?" she asks. "Or just wearing a face-pack?"

An innocent, I never knew about such things before I was married. You will understand, therefore, how I lost most of my reason, one evening in the first month, when I raced eagerly home and found that my elegant bride had been switched for a stiff-lipped zombie with a face made of pea-green pebble-dash.

Three years ago I was greeted at the door by Grock in tears. She had lobbed on a pale pink compound at lunchtime and it had gone waterproof on her. The more she washed it the harder it set, and she had spent the afternoon with a petrified face. Stone-mouthed, plaster-jawed, she couldn't talk comprehensibly

and it was this deprivation that made her cry. She carried on at me like a handicapped ventriloquist's apprentice, but for all I could pick up she might just as well have been Stanley Unwin.

That goo was a quarter-inch thick and set like royal icing. I tapped her and she sounded right geological. My daughter and I had a fascinating evening, cracking her mother gently with tablespoons and peeling her like a sad, beautiful hard-boiled egg.

She has to lock up our dachshund, these days, before she flaps on a pack. He fancies himself as a watchdog and can't recognize her with her face covered in mush. She was wearing a coffee-coloured purée one morning when he took her for a female West Indian burglar and treed her up against her own sink. He kept her there for half an hour, barking furiously for the police, until she was finally forced to scrape off the mixture and disclose her true identity.

This not only ruined the beautifying action of the fudge but it also gave the dog the idea that people were getting at him. Dachshunds are as touchy as judges about that sort of thing.

But I suppose the worst turn I ever caught cosmetically was when she re-awakened my Oliver Cromwell trauma.

It was my father's natural Irish habit, during my infancy, to deride the Lord Protector, and I was taught anti-Noll ballads as nursery rhymes. This brought me nothing but idle pleasure until I got my first job with Mr. Plume, a corn-chandler and dignitary of the Oliver Cromwell Good Name Society.

I was weighing lentils one morning and singing about the Massacre of Drogheda—*how he laughed to see the people, burning on St. Peter's Steeple*—when Mr. Plume, in silent reply, hung on the wall a white embossed plaque, a reproduction of the death-mask of his hero. The scroll beneath bore the shivering words: "I will avenge upon they that mock me; the day will come."

I had to stand all day before those blank accusing eyes and my lentil-weighing went all to pieces. I lay awake





"Roger wants a drink of water and could Frances have another hot-water bottle?"

at night in case he came for me, or dozed fitfully into nightmares of his dead-white face chasing me up steeples. Finally, I had to give up my corn-chandling career just to get a decent night's sleep.

I then forgot all about old Ironsides until, some sixteen years later, I woke up in the middle of the night. The bedroom was pitch-dark but I sensed a pale flicker of light moving about. My back hair prickled, I looked around fearfully and saw, hovering a foot above the pillow beside me, the death-mask of Oliver Cromwell.

My sub-conscious took me straight back to the lentil-counter. The day had come! The Lord Protector was back for vengeance on me and the other mockers! . . . Though why his revenge should take the form of getting into bed with me I did not then stop to consider.

"I'm sorry," I said placatingly. "I

apologize about the Massacre of Drogheda. You didn't do it. Nor Wexford either . . ."

Oliver Cromwell moaned irritably, the springs creaked and his ghost-grey mask came at me. I was out of that bed like a Royalist virgin, through the door, across the landing and streaking fast as Rupert down the stairs . . . And I'd have been going yet if a hula-hoop hadn't fouled me in the hall. As I struggled free the death-mask came floating down the banisters after me.

"Up the Roundheads!" I cried. "All my life I've been a Roundhead inside . . ."

The light switched on and my wife was standing over me done up in Madame Arletti's Richly-Nourishing All-Night Kaolin Face-Pack. From the way it glowed there must have been a bit of phosphorus in the formula. She was wearing the black lace and so I

could tell she wasn't Oliver Cromwell. I passed the whole thing off successfully by making out I was drunk but it gave me a nasty mental ricket for days afterwards . . .

. . . when I'd put down the can of hair-spray and reflected thus I continued my search for money in the dressing-table. I thought I'd struck lucky at last when my fingers crinkled paper in her glove-drawer. But it was only a cutting from the *Telegraph* in which W.F.C. advised that "there is a craze in America just now for nature face-packs. One is to use the juice of a red cabbage mixed with fresh yeast . . . another is to thicken the juice of spring onions with honey . . ."

Clearly, we've seen nothing yet. The best is yet to be. Red cabbage and yeast . . . well, all right, Life has its ups and downs. But, spring onions and honey! . . . God save us all!

The master of art or giver of wit, the belly

Little Brief Authority



Dining and Wining - By Raymond Postgate

IT is not true (though I sometimes think it) that English hotels and English catering have not improved at all in the last two centuries, or even in the last dozen years.

"The chambers are in general cold and comfortless, the beds paltry, the cookery execrable, the wine poison, the attendance bad, the publicans insolent, and the bills extortion."

That was Smollett writing in 1763, two hundred years ago. I have just found to compare with it a lunch menu whose exact date I don't know, but it was about twelve years ago, soon after the war. It reads:

Snoek

*Luncheon Sausage or Whalemeat Rissole
Rhubarb and synthetic custard.*

The rhubarb was sweetened with saccharine. Doesn't that fill you with nostalgia? Anyway, believe me, it was not an exceptionally bad meal for those days.

Neither food nor accommodation nowadays is as bad as that, or as in Smollett's day; but they are still not nearly as good as they should be.

British hotels have one enormous advantage over their rivals abroad; they have a sellers' market. You can drive across France and, unless there is a motor show or you are at the seaside, you are almost certain to find rooms easily in a decent hotel. You drive across England and you find that unless you have booked you are very lucky to get in to even the most detestable inn. Britain is under-hotelled for its population; the hoteliers benefit from

it and could afford to do better than they do.

To be fair, I don't think there is much to be said about "paltry beds and comfortless chambers." The two motoring organizations, the A.A. and R.A.C., do keep an effective check on these, and on lavatories and garages. Even smallish inns and pubs are better than they used to be. But "execrable cookery" and "poisonous wine" are with us still, and with no more excuse than in 1763. On these subjects the motoring organizations are no help at all.

I was once entertained to a lunch in Bristol by one of them; the meal stays in my mind as an example of what should not be tolerated. The "mayonnaise" to go with the scampi had been poured into the sauceboat out of a bottle, behind a screen. The vegetables were served in silver dishes, swimming in water; for me, because perhaps my face was dark with anger, the waiter squeezed them with a spoon so that some of the water ran out into a corner. The gravy was made of beef extract. The wine was shaken soundly, as if it had been Mother Siegel's Soothing Syrup. But my hosts were happy; were there not "scampi" and "fillet steaks" on the menu? What more could any one ask? Those are the only two dishes that expense-account diners know the names of.

Another lunch in a listed hotel: tinned soup; tinned stewed steak re-cooked, and cooked so long that the carrots were brown, soft and slimy

(which is difficult to do with that hard vegetable); a pudding with eggshell in it. The owners, a new couple, spoke about their problems afterwards. "It is so difficult financially. We have to have a month's holiday abroad, and of course we go to the races two or three times."

Perhaps in those sentences is part of the explanation. If those are your expectations when starting in the trade, you are taking too much and giving too little. A French family would not begin that way; it might hope for foreign holidays and racing afterwards, when it had established its hotel's reputation by hard work.

But if you don't want to work yourself, and yet propose to run a small-sized hotel, then your customers will suffer. "Lunch 12.30 to 1.30; dinner 7 to 8": over and over again I see these or some such words in hotel brochures. And heaven help you, for the landlord will not, if you arrive at 8.5. I have a letter before me (not an exceptional one) detailing how a party of Frenchmen, resident in an hotel, and headed by an old map of eighty-five, made the mistake of returning at that time and were refused food. No, not even sandwiches, said the landlord, complacent in the knowledge that they had neither redress nor any other place to go.

The Catering Wages Act is usually cited as an excuse for these rigid hours. There are many anomalies in that Act, but there is nothing in it which forbids a landlady to grill a chop herself after the usual dining hours, or hour, or a

landlord to carve slices off a cold cooked ham. True, there are some hotels which announce "a meal at any time," which they should be praised for. But even here you have to beware; the chain of Vaux hotels which make this claim also push up their charges if you try to eat outside their approved times. Fifty per cent is added to your bill in the first hour or so, and then a hundred per cent, by which time you are eating in the very-rich class, but not getting anything special.

I suppose it's better than a big hotel in South Devon, where I saw the manager turn away residents asking for dinner at eight, though he had three men in white coats pressing drinks on people in the bar. He told them to go down the road to a café that he named;

he was offended because they did not appear grateful for this kindness. He had actually got out of his office chair and given his clients the name of a place where they could get tea and chips and egg, and, believe it or not, they hardly said thank you.

The food, thus capriciously presented, or withheld, is generally badly cooked. Taking the average of the island as a whole, as well as I can and making a rough guess, I would say that only in Russia and America is the standard incontestably lower than here. And this is not to be blamed on the raw materials. They are demonstrably better than, for example, those of France. Compare any items you can think of. English tomatoes: you cannot, it is true, stuff them as you can those

large grotesquely shaped French ones, but for crispness and sweetness of taste they are incomparable. Have you ever compared our strawberries with the overlarge, cotton-woolish French berries? or our new asparagus with the fat white Lauris, good in its way though that is? Veal, that dull meat, they certainly do have better, but it is quite rare in France to find a joint of lamb as good as Welsh lamb. Continental beef is notoriously tasteless or stringy compared with Scotch, or Welsh, or even Hereford. But our superb oxen, as Alistair Cooke said the other day when he visited here, seem always to be turned "into *contrefilet* of bedroom slipper."

I have tried to compile a list of the commonest atrocities which we put up



"Good Lord! How naïve can you get? They've stood our Christmas card upside down."

with in the service of food. They are as follows; I could write an essay on each, but will not. *Overcooking*: nearly all meat is overdone, sometimes to rags. It is quite an event to find a place where the joint of beef is red. Oddly enough, the cold table of meats in a great many pubs is far better than the hot meats in this respect. *Under-seasoning*: second-rate meat and fish which need herbs never receive them, though in compensation they are often grossly over-salted and over-peppered. *Soddenness*: vegetables and even stewed fruit lie in a plethora of water. *Tepid* food, and *reheated* food, about which there is nothing to be said that the words themselves do not convey. *Tinned food*, which must be used sometimes, is allowed to become overheated and even to boil, which destroys the taste which the canning process has left. *Bottled sauces*, especially mayonnaise, arranged in trinities on the restaurant tables instead of real sauces.

The only bottled sauce which I personally would tolerate is Worcestershire sauce. *Cheeseboards*, so-called, that consist of sweating factory-made cheddar, a dry heel of chalky Danish blue, and a rubbery material called Processed Cheese. *False Pie-crusts*, squares of pastry which have had no connection, till the minute you meet them, with the steak-and-kidney or plums which they accompany . . . It is no good; I cannot deal with kippers which are painted instead of smoked, mock cream, mixed butter and marge, discourtesy, grubbiness, and the service and price of wine, which last would need a Communion Service of its own.

The remedy, however, is partially though not entirely in our own hands. Firstly, we do not complain; we accept. As editor of the *Good Food Guide* I get literally many thousands of reports on inns and hotels, and in the condemnatory reports one thing steadily recurs; that is, the surprise of head waiters and

landlords when criticism is offered. They resent it not merely because it is criticism but because it is unexpected. "We've never had a complaint before"; the reports record regularly the tones of shocked astonishment when uneatable food is sent back. But that very astonishment offers the hope of reform; it suggests that the enemy is ignorance rather than malice. Certainly, to complain is a disagreeable thing to do; it makes the atmosphere unpleasant and may well ruin the whole evening. Your wife will not support you, because women are almost always afraid of "a scene," and you may momentarily gain no satisfaction, but only receive some more impertinence. But consider which anger is the more unpleasant in the end, the anger which bursts out into plain speaking, however useless, or the anger which is repressed into your breast and simmers there all the way home.

Secondly, we do not take reasonable precautions. There are a few simple rules which every diner out can construct for himself—as for example, always to prefer in a strange town a place which puts its menu up outside, and among those menus to prefer those which contain items labelled "Specialities" or "Chef's Choice." You may not like these particular items, but the appearance of those words means that thought has been spent on the menu, and some pride is felt in it. This is unusual, and means that other dishes may also be good. Another rule, often neglected, is to add up the bill.

Finally, we do not praise. English restaurateurs are prima donnas; they are avidly, neurotically anxious for praise. Not only in Soho and Chelsea, but in every provincial restaurant or inn of distinction which I know about and esteem, there is a man or woman responsible who needs to be fed on approval and is depressed or enraged if it is withheld. Don't blame them. Think how dispiriting it must be day after day to select and prepare imaginative food properly cooked and watch it shovelled down glumly or noisily by uninterested customers who never make a remark on it and (for all you know) cannot distinguish it from rock-salmon and processed peas. Pie-faced dullards, all they deserve is to be fed pies, and after this has gone on for months, who shall blame the restaurateur if those are what he feeds them?





In the City

Uncle Sam Likes the Six

THERE were no laughs in the Commons debate on the European Free Trade Association. It took place on a motion welcoming and approving the Convention for an Association signed by seven countries, including Britain, in Stockholm. It was carried by 185 votes to 3, the Liberals fighting to the last ditch for their amendment regretting the failure of H.M.G. to associate Great Britain with the European Economic Community and its Common Market—the Six.

Now that Parliament has approved the Stockholm Agreement it may be assumed that the other countries will follow and that a European Free Trade Association of the "Outer Seven" will be functioning in the early weeks of next year.

How does one distinguish between the "Inner Six" and "Outer Seven"? Within each group there is the same plan to dismantle tariffs and quotas on manufactured goods within the coming decade. What sets them apart is, in the first place, the fact that the Six of the Common Market will in due course surround themselves by a common tariff, whereas each of the Seven will retain its own sovereignty in deciding what its tariffs will be towards the rest of the world.

An American car imported in Germany will pay the same duty as if it goes into Belgium. (They are both in the Six.) There is no guarantee that such a car coming into Britain will pay the same duty as one going into any other of the Seven. It follows that the Seven have had to devise rules about the origin of goods that will be eligible for free trade between them.

The second difference between the two groups is that the Six have a political objective: nothing less than the federation of Europe. The Seven, either because they are inveterate neutrals like the Swedes and the Swiss,

or because they have links with other countries, like Britain's with the Commonwealth, are a much looser combination dedicated to freer trade but to little else.

This is where Mr. Dillon comes in. The U.S. Under-Secretary of State has recently toured the capitals of Europe on a voyage of exploration and exhortation. The latter was directed at those laggards who have allowed the United States to bear too large a share of the burden of helping the poorer countries of the world. This was said in a particularly audible voice in Bonn.

Here in London Mr. Dillon was mainly concerned with the Six and the Seven, and he astonished some of his listeners by his strong predilection for the Six of the Common Market—because public and official opinion in the United States admired the political objective of the Common Market. This is entirely understandable and appropriate. Mr. Dillon and his compatriots

believe in the American way of life. Here is an attempt being made by the Six to imitate the U.S.A. in creating a United States of Europe—the sincerest form of flattery. Americans may think again if the Common Market is found to be dedicated not only to political federation but also to external discrimination against the rest of the world including the United States.

Fortunately, private industry is as usual proving more flexible and adventurous in this than are governments. In the chemical industry, for example, I.C.I. have for some time been exporting their know-how to Europe, and through licensing agreements are well and truly entrenched in the Common Market. In the motor industry, the British Motor Corporation and Standard Triumph International, have recently made moves to obtain direct representation in Europe. That is how the reality of United Europe will eventually be achieved.

— LOMBARD LANE



In the Country

Plants Out of Place?

FROM the top of a neighbouring church tower a small stunted yew tree, presumably bird-sown but aged about 150 years, was recently removed. Not without ill-feeling. For years the parish had a party which said "The roots *must* be damaging the masonry and the leverage from wind-blow must be awful in a gale. The tower will be ruined by the absurd thing. Cut it off." Opponents staunchly retorted "Only over our dead bodies. It was mentioned by Richard Jefferies." But the pro-tower anti-tree party has triumphed. Without corpses.

You may spot trees rooted and growing (not always so reluctantly as might be expected) in some very odd places. Try, for example, walls in the north-east of Kew Gardens, or at Oxford between the Bodleian extension and the School of Agriculture. And of course on various ruins.

Plants on ruins introduce another highly contentious slant. The Ministry of Works, if and when they gain control, normally clean up: valerian, wallflowers, ivy-leaved toadflax, herb-robert, hart's tongue, spleenwort, wall-rue and the like, great and small, are all anathema. An air of sterilization is correct, for the ministerial office is to arrest decay. Plants promote decay—or at least disintegration. People who complain (as of our local abbey) that "the place is being embalmed; there's no picturesque decay; and it has lost its soul with its beauty" are pitifully unenlightened silly-billies.

Some people love lichenized roofs and they spray any patch of new tiles with weak cow tea to encourage establishment or colonization. Others stretch copper wires along the ridges so that the drip may completely inhibit even this humblest form of plant life. Both parties are implementing subjective judgments I suppose, but if anything the lichen-haters and their fellow rooters-out are behaving slightly more objectively than the lichen-lovers. What the latter want is a really *practical* reason for letting plants grow on their tiles, but such reasons are becoming rare. The commonest kind of houseleek, *Sempervivum tectorum*, used to be planted on many roofs as a protection against witches and lightning. In fact we found it growing on ours when we bought our cottage; but I am afraid we decided it could not be wholly good for the roof.

— J. D. U. WARD

Toby Competitions

No. 93—Brokers' Men Welcome

TRY a brief extract from a pantomime scene, contemporary in setting and characters. Limit 150 words (admittedly severe; in exceptional cases up to 200 words may not be barred).

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive a book token to the value of one guinea. Entries by first post on Friday, January 1, to TOBY COMPETITION No. 93, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Competition No. 90

(There was a...)

Entries were numerous but many competitors seemed to have forgotten the basic essentials of a limerick. The world of entertainment inspired a good deal of acrimony, and Lord Montgomery was a popular target. Sir Winston Churchill, in a favourable sense, scooped the pool numerically. The winner was:

MRS. M. GRANT
LUD LODGE
STONE GALLOWES HILL
TAUNTON

THEN AS NOW



"WHEN WE WERE BOYS TOGETHER!"

Uncle Robin (looking at Toy Shop window). "AH! THEY DON'T MAKE SUCH AMUSING TOYS NOW AS THEY USED TO MAKE SIXTY OR SEVENTY YEARS AGO, DO THEY DICK?"

Uncle Richard. "No, BY GEORGE! NOTHING LIKE!"

January 1 1881

There was a young chap, Peter May,
Took a team the West Indian way,
May we wish 'em "Good Luck,"
No bottles, few duck,
And a happy and bright Christmas Day.

Runners-up:

There once was a doctor named Moore,
Who said to her tortoise "We'll tour.
To London we'll march
Till we reach Marble Arch,
And next week I'll do an encore."

Mrs. P. E. Laycock, 43 Langholm Crescent, Darlington, Co. Durham

There was a young artist called Russ
Who put girls in a terrible fuss,
When he smiled on the telly
They trembled like jelly,
Neglecting poor fishes like us.

Basil Noble, 394 Coniscliffe Road, Darlington, Co. Durham

There was an old Member called Bevan,
Whose aim was to make Britain heaven.
When they said "You will fail":
He replied "Ebbw Vale
Gives the strength to its children of seven."

Mrs. Barbara Lewis, 42 Irene Road, London, S.W.6

There was an old sage in New Delhi,
Who said "When you're kicked in the belly
By a neighbouring tribe
Don't browbeat—don't bribe.
Be Nehru, not Machiavelli."

Mrs. Joyce Parr, 20 Filby Road, Chessington, Surrey

There was an old painter named Kelly,
Who often appeared on the Telly:
For singing Art's praises
In picturesque phrases
There's no one to touch Gerald Kelly.

Martin Fagg, 22 Pinewood Road, Bromley, Kent

There was an old lady called Topham,
Who'd hedges with horses to hop 'em.
When they said "Let us see
The event on TV"
She replied, "There's nowt now to stop 'em."

Dr. R. Pakenham-Walsh, Well House, Lancaster

One Slightly Worn Red Coat For Sale

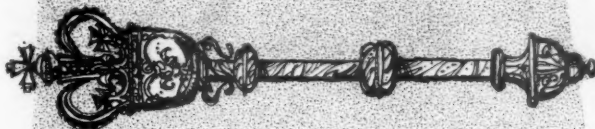
The Garth Hunt plans to raise funds by a football pool scheme.

I TURN from hot pursuit of the uneatable
To pleasures of a more plebeian kind.
My quarry's the predictably unbeatable;
Block permutations occupy my mind.
Despairingly the Master's horn resounds;
In vain he shouts those ritualistic shouts.
Who cares if I am riding over hounds?
I've more important things to think about.

At last I've found the excitement of the chase
Without the chase's more unpleasant shocks.
One gets no rain—or branches—in one's face;
One dislocates no shoulders, breaks no necks . . .
Other damned fools may seek the elusive fox—
Henceforth I'll hunt instead the elusive x.

— KEITH STYLES

Essence



of Parliament

GOING home for the hols. The last week had ended with a Government defeat—or at least with the rejection of the Government's advice—about a Private Member's bill to insist on better office equipment. A majority against the Government is always good fun, but it is not certain what is to be made of this defeat. Obviously it does not mean that the bill gets on to the Statute Book. Everyone knows that it had no chance of that without Government support. Since the division was immediately preceded by the Conservative Mr. Maddan urging his colleagues to vote for the bill against Mr. Vosper's advice, it appeared at first sight that there had been a Conservative back-bench revolt against the Government; but it seems in fact that only six Conservatives followed Mr. Maddan's advice. It is true that owing to some confusion about the divisions a few Conservatives seem to have left the Palace of Westminster thinking that they had recorded their votes when in fact they had not done so. Nevertheless, allowing for both these facts, the majority for the bill was so large that neither Mr. Maddan's Conservatives nor the abstainers under misapprehension could possibly have made any difference to the result. All that the division proved was that more Conservatives were absent than Socialists, and whether this meant that a lot of Conservatives approved of the bill or whether it merely meant that more

Conservatives than Socialists go away for the week-end there is no way of knowing.

In the Lords Lord Morrison of Lambeth claimed that during the Battle of Britain, when there was nothing else that he could do, he at least made some noise. The tactics of the Socialists these days seem to be often much the same. There seems to be some reason to think that Dr. Drakeley was a bit roughly treated in his dismissal from the North-Western Metropolitan Hospital Board, though it had nothing to do with the Minister of Health. But the Socialists obscured their case by dragging in the irrelevance that Mrs. Henry Brooke was appointed to this entirely honorary post in his place. Mr. George Brown may (or may not) have been correct in alleging that the Conservatives behaved in much the same way when they were in opposition. But that is exactly the sort of charge that makes the ordinary citizen despair of the whole race of politicians.

It was much the same story in the telephone-tapping censure debate on Wednesday. There were clearly two quite different issues—whether the listening by the police by invitation to a telephone conversation could properly be called interception, and whether it was desirable that information so acquired should be given to such a body as the British Medical Council. The second question was by far the more important. The first appeared perhaps

Mr. Gordon Walker



Mr. Martin Maddan

at first sight to be more likely to hit the headlines. The Opposition put up Mr. Gordon Walker who, as one would expect of a Don, completely botched it by preferring the inessential to the essential. The great argument for University seats was that in those days everyone knew who were Dons and who were not. It was left to Mr. Deedes to rescue the debate from absurdity by making its one sensible and relevant speech.

Mr. Butler does not like having votes of censure moved upon him, and he did not meet it all with his customary composure. He had indeed already been considerably discomposed by Mr. Emrys Hughes' nagging of him for the equivocal remarks about sanctions against Eire which he had made in Northern Ireland. No one doubts, of course, that Mr. Butler has no intentions of imposing sanctions, but no one in this island would expect him to say as much without qualification. Mr. Butler is the sort of golfer who would scorn to do a hole in one if he could possibly think of a way of doing it in two. But Mr. Hughes had a point in arguing that there are Irishmen alike in the South and in the North who do not fully understand that it is a point of honour with Mr. Butler never to say anything clearly if he can possibly say it obscurely.

Christmas comes but once a year and it would have been too bad if the Socialists had had to trek off to their turkey and plum-pudding without having unanimously agreed that they would do nothing different from the Conservatives about German rearmament until the Conservatives had agreed to do something different from what they were doing now. For this supreme achievement of reconciling statesmanship they were indebted to Mr. Bevan. But even Mr. Bevan could not inject into an atmosphere in which all else was harmony a friendship between the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. In a world in which few others any longer take the party system seriously, it is perhaps only decent that these two should quarrel, if not about policy, at least about manners. So there was a sort of flickering fitness in their private school exchanges about the Monckton Commission on Thursday with which the House broke up for its Christmas holidays. Sucks to you and plenty of them. — PERCY SOMERSET

A La Mode

IT scarcely seems possible that for generations women could have been so wrong-headed, could have failed to realize that the correct approach to maternity was to be gay, sophisticated, above all, casual. Think of all that dreadful "Birth is real, birth is earnest" stuff, the fuss over the few aches and pains involved, the wallowings in mother love, the unhappy notion that while children were young they must be the central thing in Mama's life.

Well, thank goodness I'm above all that, having been born into an age in which pregnancy is *fun*, in which labour is brisk, invigorating exercise, and in which children, tedious little brats, are being pushed firmly back to the outskirts of their mother's consciousness.

Take me. Take Chlorinda. The other day I realized to my surprise that it must be well over a year since the afternoon I hopped on my motor scooter and dawdled down to Queen Charlotte's. (I had felt an intimation of the event soon after breakfast but I wasn't going to miss the champagne lunch I'd been promised as part of somebody or other's sales promotion.) Enema, bath, baby, another bath, and I was back at the office sharp on four just in time for a cup of tea, suffering nothing worse than a slight hangover from the champagne.

"Did you feel an upsurge of beautiful emotion when you first saw Baby?" asked the Mothercraft Editor cynically, adjusting her cuff-links. She's a real old toughie.

"Darling, you never saw anything so

FOR
WOMEN



hideous. Pure chimpanzee." Actually, Chlorinda wasn't bad-looking, but I wasn't going to slobber over her like a bourgeois housewife, and besides it's generally agreed nowadays that children at practically every age are crashing bores, everybody says so.

Gregory and I hadn't gone to too much trouble preparing the layette, as it seemed a much better idea to spend the money on me. I prided myself on wearing a new dress every day of my pregnancy, so that I should remain exciting and *different*, and some of these came down to my ankles, as it is important to counteract the bulk with a long, uncluttered line. I concentrated on ankle interest, wrist interest, elbow interest, neck interest and even head interest. One's head, after all, remains the same size throughout pregnancy, and one should make the most of this fact. Gregory fed me daily on chocolate ants and roasted silkworms, braised grasshoppers and toasted bees to tempt my jaded appetite, and though I was often sick it was an unusual gastronomic experience.

We thought it silly to waste money on a crib or a carry-cot which the child would only grow out of, so we found a nice cardboard box and Gregory lined it with a bit of blanket. We painted the nursery black (it doesn't show the dirt) and I prepared all her little garments in black for the same reason. As a sop to fancy I couldn't resist making a tiny black Plantagenet headdress, *à la* Sitwell, and I must say when she was taken out for walks in Holland Park this was a riot. Gregory balked utterly at the idea of buying a costly pram for all the world like some working-class couple, and so we begged an orange-box from our grocer, painted it a gay purple, and put a couple of wheels and a handle on it. It couldn't have been more unusual. For a bath I cut the bottom off a

40-gallon oil drum, and provided one is careful of the sharp edges this is perfectly splendid and will do as a paddling pool later on.

Nothing, we had agreed from the first, should be allowed to interrupt my career as Emotional Problems Editor on the weekly paper *Female*, so I engaged a kindly middle-aged lady who only recently had come to me for advice. (She was a twig-wielder at the sauna baths and had become a bit muscle-bound.) We call her "Chlorinda's Keeper," as nannies are a bit whimsy these days.

Since one should begin as one means to go on, and we are determined that our children shall not become the tyrannical pivot of the household, we have not allowed our social life to be interrupted one jot. Grandmothers are a device planted in this world by an all-wise providence for parents who want to get rid of their offspring, but when even they turn bolshie we bundle Chlorinda up in a white satin shawl and lug her along with us. The child has already visited Glyndebourne, Covent Garden (Wagner gives her astonishing nightmares), Sotheby's, and a couple of Ingmar Bergman pictures.

Talking of her cultural life, I venture to say that this has been exceptional for a child not yet two. We have never believed in talking baby language to her and I have made a point of discussing with her questions of the day such as the Anglo-Catholic débâcle at Carshalton, the role of De Gaulle in French politics, and the dangers of warm relations with Western Germany. Gregory, who is of a more scientific cast of mind, has given her a rough working knowledge of the Dounreay Reactor and impressed upon her the importance of knowing the second law of thermodynamics. (Well, you know what Sir Charles Snow said.) I am



afraid she is not going to be bright, as inexplicably she seems to prefer Gregory's mother babbling about bow-wows and gee-gees, and the melancholy destiny of the little pigs who went to market.

But I am convinced that this casual, sophisticated approach is the right one, and apart from a hint of scurvy, a suggestion of duodenal ulcers, a frightful temper, and a tendency to start nervously and scream every time Gregory or I or the Keeper come near her, Chlorinda is a very bonny baby. I do think motherhood is bliss.

— MONICA FURLONG

Exchange Visit

IF all you girls who came *au pair* To study English half a year Returned from Berne or Rome Or Hanover this Christmastide, I think that you would stand wide-eyed To see how you've transmogrified Our rather English home.

Now every year, for Britta's sake,
We make this Swedish Lucy cake
And hail the Queen of Light.
And Irmgard taught us how to twine
This ring of candles, moss and pine,
Like those in German homes that shine
On Advent Sunday night.

We open little Austrian doors
To count the days till Santa Claus
On pictures from Godelieve.
And wrapped in warm Italian stoles
We dream of Solveg, talk of Trolls,
And in Swiss fondue dip French rolls
This English Christmas Eve.

Do you in turn bake our mince-pies
And serve plum-pudding, English-wise,
While listening to the Queen?
And set your cards out in a row,
Hang paper chains and mistletoe,
And say "In England they do so,
I know, because I've been?"

— ANNE HAWARD

Just What She Wanted . . .

THERE is no surer way of understanding the basic seriousness of the French than to walk through the toy department of one of the Grands Magasins at Christmastime. It may be a losing battle, especially if you happen to choose a Thursday, the tots' weekly holiday in France; but if you do come through you will have learned a lot about the French attitude to life.

The cuddly bear (guaranteed this year to launder in the washing machine) and Bo-peep sections can be skipped; the demands of pram-agers are much the same the world over—though of course, there's no knowing what Minou Drouet and Françoise Sagan were up to in their prams. But from then on, toys, over here, tend to reflect a surprisingly precocious concern with the practical, the serious, particularly in their application to human suffering.

Last year accent was on the Sick Room; and good little French girls found in their *sabots* on Christmas morning, "Baby-Infirmière," an alarmingly

complete nurse-cum-doctor outfit comprising stethoscope, thermometer, blood-pressure gauge, nerve-reaction mallet, forceps, surgical scissors, bed-pan, urinal, bandages and splints—all of course reduced to the dimensions of chubby fingers.

This year it is "Baby-Dentiste," a quite fascinating *nécessaire* in a candy-pink box consisting of a range of probes and drills, a spittoon, paper napkins, cotton wool, a gas-mask equipment and a dear little pair of extractors—everything, in fact, to keep little Marie busy and happy in the nursery when it is too wet for her to go for her daily toddle in the Parc Monceau.

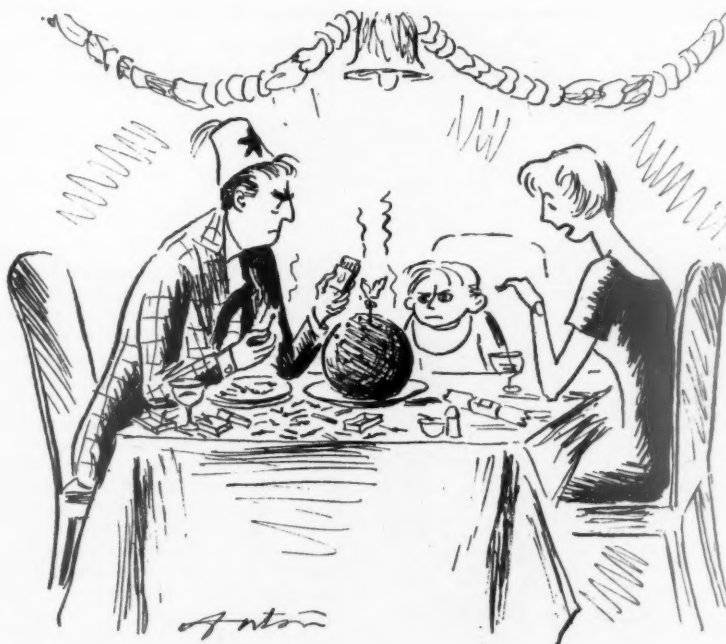
— PHYLLIS HEATHCOTE

☆

Miscellaneous Sales

"PORCELAIN BAT, £5. White Sink and Chrome Taps, 30/-.—Sou. 1159."

For use with crystal ball perhaps.



"Good heavens—it's tea-time."



BOOKING OFFICE

Field-Marshal Belisarius

Auchinleck. John Connell. *Cassell*, 35/-

I SOMETIMES wonder if military operations wouldn't go rather better if the generals would stop writing everything in terms of cheery clichés. Even in their private letters they keep telling you that the troops are in great heart and that they're going to knock the stuffing out of the Boche. When this kind of language is used in official communications it is hardly surprising that the message doesn't always get across.

General Auchinleck to Prime Minister
22 November 1941

Prospects of achieving our immediate object, namely the destruction of the German forces, seem good.

General Auchinleck to Prime Minister
22 November 1941

Spirit and dash shown by commanders and troops have been remarkable. In my opinion Cunningham has so far fought this extremely complicated battle with great skill and daring...

Four days later Operation Crusader had floundered to a stop and General Cunningham had been sacked.

So much of this period's misfortune seems to spring from this kind of failure in communications. Churchill did not really know what Auchinleck was doing; Auchinleck never seems to have been as fully in Cunningham's or Ritchie's battle picture as he should have ensured he was; Ritchie does not seem to have had enough liaison with his Corps Commanders.

Mr. Connell cannot forgive Churchill for having replaced his hero by General

Alexander in August 1942. (It was Auchinleck's suggestion, by the way.) But if he had not gone then, what should we have had? He concedes that Auchinleck was not a good picker of men, and not firm enough with his subordinates; to be specific, that he should have removed Ritchie sooner than he did. If Auchinleck had stayed that August he would not have been commanding Eighth Army: Gott would. And whereas Mr. Connell focuses his praise of Auchinleck's generalship on his handling of Eighth Army, he never misses a chance to say what a bad corps commander he thinks Gott was, and what a bad influence on Ritchie; so if Auchinleck was so weak with his commanders, surely it is as well that this didn't happen.

Or suppose, Gott having been killed as he was, Montgomery had taken over Eighth Army under Auchinleck. They had never managed to get on before. How could they now? It was surely better for Auchinleck to go when he did, even if only as a sacrifice to the gods of success; and since his refulgent career was resumed ten months later as C.-in-C. India, and pursued thereafter with ever-increasing renown, it seems a pity to labour this point so hard. It is true that Churchill and others said some jolly silly and unjust things about Auchinleck in their time, but Sir Claude's record can speak for itself. On this occasion it seems that the Prime Minister was guilty only of that sin condemned by T. S. Eliot, "to do the right thing for the wrong reason."

There was after all so much in Auchinleck's life for him to be proud of, and Mr. Connell has laid it all before us very completely, lucidly and enthusiastically (though he might have spared us some of those endless documents and letters). It is only where he has allowed his anger to get the better of him that he goes astray. He is most at home in the final phase of Auchinleck's life, where, first as Commander-in-Chief and later as Supreme Commander under Mountbatten's viceroyalty, he attends the rupture of the Indian sub-continent

THESE LOOKS SPEAK VOLUMES

A Panorama of Publishers



14. FREDRIC J. WARBURG

BORN 1898. Educated Westminster and Christ Church.

Good at classics and philosophy, but bad at games except croquet. Became publisher young, starting with Routledge's in the heavyweight class of books. Acquired assets of Martin Secker in 1936, and started on perilous career. After serving under Sergeant Eric Blair (George Orwell) in Home Guard, became Orwell's publisher in 1945. Also Moravia's and Angus Wilson's. Six American publishers bid for his recent autobiography *An Occupation for Gentlemen*. Tall, something like Bogart in a bad light; mild but becoming irritable; heterodox; polytropic in his interests, but no polymath. Objective, a peaceful existence and an ordered life. Nature optimistic.

and guides, to the last moment he can, his beloved Indian troops through the unspeakable horrors that it caused.

Beside all this great achievement, what is the importance of an unfair dismissal, with a clear conscience? Mr. Connell insists on casting the Auk as Belisarius; but he is Belisarius with a field-marshal's baton and G.C.B., G.C.I.E., C.S.I., D.S.O., O.B.E. after his name.

— B. A. YOUNG

NEW NOVELS

I Can Take it All. Anthony Glyn. *Hutchinson*, 16/-

A Winter's Tale. Robert Hardy. *Chatto and Windus*, 16/-

Dashbury Park. Susan Tweedsmuir. *Duckworth*, 13/6

The Shriek of the Gull. Peter de Polnay. *Allen*, 13/6

THE Finns have a playful habit of measuring a knife-blade over your heart and asking how much can you take; the correct reply to this rather Arctic jest—supposing your host is sufficiently sober—is the title of Anthony Glyn's new novel, *I Can Take It All*. His hero, writing in the first person, is put right through the hoop of Finnish life, the aquavit, the Hall of Nobility, the interminable stories of the Winter War, and emerges in one piece. He is a young English amorist who falls in love for the first time with a Finnish cartoonist to whom trolls are serious business; the novel is mainly concerned with pursuit and conquest, but there is also one very good flashback to his boyhood experience in Paris, where he found out about life with an art-student on the Left Bank. I didn't like him very much, he was so crudely ambitious and so sure of himself with the girls; but he is fully alive, as are all Mr. Glyn's characters. He is an exceptionally thorough writer; when he takes you to a timber-mill he makes its processes fascinating, and he takes the same trouble with his people. This is an exceedingly readable novel, quick in humour, and gives an excellent idea of the bleak compulsions of Finland.

Robert Hardy is much heavier going, in *A Winter's Tale*, an irritating novel because it is so nearly good. He writes an oblique and highly metaphorical Jamesian style, his dialogue archly allusive and elliptical, his imagery wantonly complex; and yet when he forgets to be clever he can say a great deal in a short, powerful paragraph, in admirably clear prose. His story could be compressed with advantage. It is about a bitter and rather priggish young schoolmaster who shoots his unfaithful wife and finds solace, while on the run, in a sudden love-affair with a chorus girl whose conversation strangely embraces the Greek philosophers and Baudelaire and Synge. Even the barmaid talks like someone out of a Fry play. The surprise ending is ingenious, if not altogether convincing.

Dashbury Park is a successor to *Cousin Harriet*, and is another of Lady Tweedsmuir's novels about a Victorian family; although she writes of a later society, it might almost be a skilful pastiche of Jane Austen. But Lady Tweedsmuir was brought up herself in a great house at the end of the century, and there is nothing second-hand about her material. She knows all her characters intimately, as we soon do—their secret thoughts, their gossip, their malice and their suspicions—and it is a great pleasure to watch her manipulation, with the utmost delicacy, of their precise reactions. Tenderness is not outside her pattern; the splendid old lady lying upstairs, a crippled elder statesman, is beautifully described. This is witty and authentic social history.

The Shriek of the Gull has an absurd plot, but Peter de Polnay drives it along with a tough, farcical style that he maintains successfully. A nice, ineffective little man is left a huge monstrosity of a seaside house, and becomes hopelessly involved in trying to turn it to profit. His mistress wants it to be a country club, while his local partners aim no higher than a boarding house. The resulting turmoil grows fairly mad, with witches upstairs and bastard brothers everywhere, but Mr. de Polnay's best invention is a terribly earnest woman who gets his reluctant hero into her amorous clutches and nearly extinguishes him. There is a lot of bed, but treated mercifully lightly. I found it a funny book. One thing Mr. de Polnay forgot was the licence for the bar. As it was, the police would have been round in five minutes.

—ERIC KEOWN

OTHER NEW BOOKS

My Russian Journey. Santha Rama Rau. *Gollancz*, 21/-

Here is a young Indian woman, married to an American, who has actually fallen in love with Russia, and is not afraid to say so. When things do not please her she blames as fearlessly as she praises, but without that built-in contempt for Russia which has become a part of the American way of life. There is an eager feminine curiosity and a joy in telling which make this a very good book. Miss Rau is able to assure us that even in Soviet Russia they have "wine and music still, and statues and a bright-eyed love." The statues may fail to please her—"Yes, yes! There is only one standard. If the public do not understand it is not art!"—but there are many glimpses of life which suggest that much of the great Russian heart is in the right place. A good travel book should make you think you have been, or else want to go. Oddly enough this seems to do both.

—R.A.G.

The Atlantic Book of British and American Poetry. Edited by Dame Edith Sitwell. *Gollancz*, 2 vols. 63/-

Dame Edith, with her usual knack of picking the right poets for the wrong



reasons, has produced a large and useful, if slightly rummy, anthology. The poets with whom she has no sympathy are either represented by their Golden-Treasury pieces or, occasionally, left out completely. The ones she likes receive delicate and sympathetic treatment, especially the Elizabethans. Occasionally she contributes a fascinating little preface on the linguistic technique of a favourite poet, but even these are a bit odd; for instance, in praising Swinburne's felicitous of language she never hints that most of his lines contain a deal more meaning than is usually allowed him. The poets are arranged roughly chronologically, with occasional adjustments to suit Dame Edith's sense of fitness.

— P. D.

AT THE PLAY

A Clean Kill (CRITERION)
Make Me An Offer (NEW)
Treasure Island (MERMAID)

TO my mind *A Clean Kill* is the best crime play since *Dial "M" for Murder*. It is extremely plausible and scrupulously fair. It kept me guessing right into the third act, but at the end allowed me the satisfactory feeling that I had never been double-crossed. The first stage play by Michael Gilbert, who writes whodunit novels and plants bodies on television, it shows an attention to character which is uncommon in detection drama, and it is full of well-judged humour.

How much can I safely give away? A clever scientist has a neurotic wife on the bottle, who gives him hell, and a faithful lab. assistant, whom he loves. Together they have invented an un-smelly cleaning fluid. The scientist's wife, a director of their little company, infuriates them by turning down an offer which their solicitor urges them to accept. Soon afterwards she dies in a drunken coma, and cleaning fluid is found mixed with her whisky (her motive in rejecting the bid had been jealousy, but in fact she was perfectly right; I couldn't see why Mr. Gilbert made his solicitor so grossly incompetent in this matter—the patent was obviously worth far more, properly auctioned). The candidates for a life sentence are all those I have mentioned, plus a private detective and a Mrs. Mopp.

It is not often that we get such interesting acting in a crime play. This cast adds to the author's excitements by its even distinction. Peter Copley gets right inside the naïve, single-minded inventor, and Rachel Roberts is excellent as the Welsh assistant. Hugh Latimer has to lead in several scenes, as the lawyer, and does it immaculately. Helen Christie is exceedingly unlikeable as the evening's victim, and Dandy Nichols is a ripe, unexaggerated charlady. Garry Marsh gives a beautiful performance as the seedy detective, and the law proper is powerfully presented by Andrew Keir. All the odds and ends are soundly tied up in Alistair Sim's production.

From Theatre Workshop comes *Make Me an Offer*, a small-scale musical, that is unusually witty and original. By Wolf Mankowitz (from his own novel), with Monty Norman's lyrics and David Heneker's music, it sings the past glories of the fleamarket in the Portobello Road, and in particular the tribulations of an honest young Wedgwood dealer who has to learn in a hard school that honesty doesn't pay. It is very much a *quartier* piece, and in its toughness and sophisticated simplicity it has something in common with *Irma la Douce*. The junk-dealers, a cheerful crew, do each other down with the utmost good-fellowship; their salty humour makes a good running background in Joan Littlewood's production to commercial intrigue, to a passing affair between the Wedgwood boy and an intruder from *Debrett*, and to a very funny auction scene. The lyrics have point and I got the impression that several of the tunes, especially "Whatever You Believe," will stick.

Daniel Massey is engaging as the harassed hero, and Diana Coupland, who can sing, makes his patient wife a woman of spirit. Dilys Laye puts her revue experience to crisp use as the girl from outside, and Sheila Hancock scores a personal success as an adenoidal nitwit—she is a thinner and more pensive Dora Bryan. The dealers, individuals all, are splendidly led by Martin Miller and Wally Patch.

Pace and tension seemed to me to suffer in the panoramic treatment given to *Treasure Island* at the Mermaid, where ship and anchorage and stockade are all in sight at once, to be picked out by lights as needed. When the crews go ashore, their dinghies are carried on the revolving stage; this is only a pretty trick that loses precious time. But Peter Coe's production uses effectively the other resources of the Mermaid; film-shots of raging seas and terrific storm-recordings make one brace oneself in one's seat; the hailing of the *Hispaniola* by the tiny distant voice of the skipper of *The Golden Rose* (projected from the back of the house) is a very exciting moment, and there are a few memorable seconds when a silence is broken only by the authentic creaking of rigging.

The name of the adaptor is not in the programme (this is not Fagan's version), but he has been very faithful to Stevenson. The fights are all that any juvenile delinquent could wish, and the pirates as foul a crew as ever shipped from Puddle Dock. Bernard Miles plays Silver with a broad accent and an ingratiating cunning, John Hall is an attractively unaffected Jim Hawkins, and Michael Shepley is to the life my notion

of Squire Trelawney. Among several rousing lower deck performances are John Ruddick's Benn Gunn and Douglas Blackwell's Israel.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The Amorous Prawn (Saville—16/12/59) good farcical comedy. *The Marriage-Go-Round* (Piccadilly—4/11/59), light exercise for Kay Hammond and John Clements. *Pieces of Eight* (Apollo—30/9/59), Kenneth Williams triumphant in new revue.

—ERIC KEOWN

AT THE PICTURES

Lords of the Forest Follow a Star

I n a thin week, I have found most pleasure in certain sequences and scenes of the Belgian colour documentary about the Congo, *Lords of the Forest* (Directors: Heinz Sielmann and Henry Brandt). I am limiting my approval in that way because the piece is not satisfactory as a whole.

The main trouble, as almost always with this kind of thing, is the commentary. Here it is spoken alternately by Orson Welles and William Warfield—I could detect no special reason why one rather than the other should have been given a particular passage to speak, though one voice is solemn, booming, pompous and slow and the other is altogether livelier, lighter and quicker. But the words they have to say, "based on Max-Pol Foucher's French script," which for all I know may have been better, often have a deadly pretentiousness and are perpetually sliding into ineffective, undistinguished pentameters. "His duties as a father now fulfilled, he can return to his euphoria tree"—that was an eagle, I think, after carrying some food to his young; but it is pointless and distracting to take leave of him so ponderously.

The fundamental fault of the film is that it tries to make simultaneously two different kinds of effect that are mutually exclusive. Interesting, revealing, often beautiful pictures are one thing; heavily obvious philosophical ideas expressed in words carefully balanced in a rhythm popularly believed to indicate Fine Writing are something else. You can't attend to the pictures if you're listening, and the pictures are so infinitely more worth attending to that the words soon



Long John Silver—BERNARD MILES

[*Treasure Island*]

EXHIBITIONS

"Punch in the Theatre," Theatre Royal, Lincoln.

"Punch in the Cinema," Gaumont Cinema, Birmingham.

"Punch with Wings," Exhibition Hall, Queens Buildings, London, London Airport Central.

become very irritating. All we really want here is the minimum of quite simple explanation. This is the reed-hen (a charming and amusing scene of its progress across water on floating leaves, stepping off each leaf just as it begins to sink), these are the Watussi girls dancing their ceremonial dance of the cranes, this is the pangolin, this is how the rain-maker goes about his job—such plain statements as that are all that's needed. It is just not true that a voice booming "Africa! holding the secrets of the distant past," or sternly mystical remarks about the forest's being "forbidden to men," or attempts to work up suspense of the "Will he get there in time?" kind (when an animal is shown running or flying)—it is just not true that this stuff even earns its position on the soundtrack. A great many of the (CinemaScope, Eastman Colour) pictures of animals, human beings and scenery are wonderful. It would be pleasant to watch them in peace.

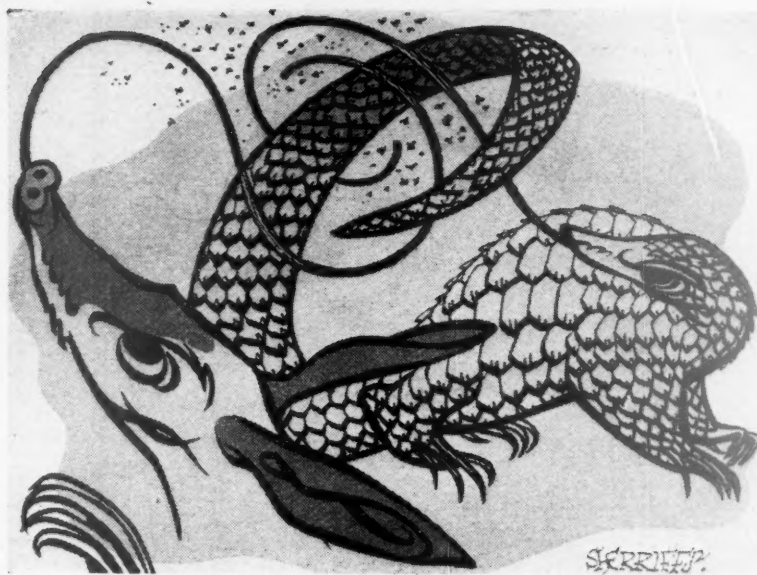
The exasperating thing about the Norman Wisdom films is that in all of them there is an occasional genuinely, imaginatively or perceptively funny moment that shows how good they might be if someone took more trouble with them, or aimed higher. *Follow a Star* (Director: Robert Asher) actually begins with a little surprise-revelation scene that provides a real laugh—which loses half its strength because people have hardly settled down in their seats after spelling out the British Board of Film Censors certificate. A little later come a quite simple few moments of miming when we see Mr. Wisdom through a shop-window as he buys a flower; this too is amusing, exactly in the Chaplin manner—I'm not sure Chaplin didn't actually do it once, but it remains funny. One begins to hope—could it really be that they're using him properly this time...? The let-down comes at once. "Little Norman" approaches the front-garden gate of his girl's house, and for no conceivable reason except that he is "little Norman" who is supposed to do that kind of thing gets straddled over the top of it (it has spikes) and yells as it swings open. The audience yells too; that's what they want, and they don't care how they get it.

* * * * *

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Next week's article will have to deal with the two new big ones, *On the Beach* and *Ben-Hur*, so I want to put in a recommendation now for a little British comedy I've seen since writing the above. *Desert Mice* (Director: Michael Relph) is about an Ensa troupe in the desert and I found it very amusing indeed, forty times as funny as the Norman Wisdom film. There's no room for details, but one fact should be rubbed in: real laughter like this comes not from the performance of one starred funny



(Lords of the Forest)

Anti-Antibodies

man but from team-work—a number of skilled comedy players admirably directed in an excellently contrived comic script (David Climie). Apart from this there's a considerable choice in London. More comedy? A cheerfully absurd French one, *Babette Goes to War* (25/11/59); another, glossier French one, *Charmants Garçons*, in the same programme as the very funny Italian *Persons Unknown* (both 2/12/59); and the gay British *Expresso Bongo* (9/12/59). On the serious side: *Les Amants* (11/11/59), uneven, with patches of brilliance; Sartre's *Huis Clos* or *Vicious Circle* (16/12/59), not much of a film, but fascinatingly played and directed; and *The Savage Eye* (25/11/59), striking pictures with less distinguished words. Then there's a fine colour spectacular about the Civil War, John Ford's *The Horse Soldiers* (16/12/59); and the one that offers more different kinds of enjoyment than any of the others, *Anatomy of a Murder* (14/10/59).

Releases include *The Five Pennies* (4/11/59), in which Red Nichols plays the trumpet and Danny Kaye plays Red Nichols, without being given enough chances to play the fool; and a visually fine Disney for the school holidays, *Third Man on the Mountain* (9/12/59).

— RICHARD MALLETT

ON THE AIR

Funny Men

CHARLIE DRAKE, in his new BBC series, is still not quite right, but he remains a very droll fellow and I hope that before long the formula will be made to work satisfactorily. I

submit that the character Mr. Drake has created, although evidently a compound of several earlier comic creations, is sound enough and universal enough to stand up for a long time to come, provided it is let loose in sympathetically contrived scripts. (This, I fear, does not apply in the case of the half-witted monster evolved by Bernard Bresslaw from a character he used to play in "The Army Game." He made a singularly lame appearance in a recent "Bernard Delfont's Sunday Show" (ATV), and it was obvious that the humorous possibilities of his gormless oaf—although he plays him with a terrifying realism—are getting very few and far between.) Mr. Drake's perkily-pathetic figure, with a fascinating London accent I am at a loss to identify (is it even in Peter Sellers' vast repertoire?), has obvious Chaplinesque echoes, and now that the treacly sentiment that clogged his earlier efforts has been more or less dispensed with I see no reason why the series should not be successful. This dumpy little man has splendid slapstick notions, and carries them out superbly. But we could do with more of them. I think, too, that either he as one of the writers, or Ernest Maxin as the producer, should be a little more free with the pencil when it comes to cutting. Some of the situations are dragged out beyond their strength. We should not have time to think while the comic wheels are turning—that is fatal in crazy or exaggerated comedy. I suppose it is a truism, but I believe our comics and producers cannot spend too many hours studying the quicksilver technique of the "Phil Silvers Show" (BBC). This has the advantage of being canned, but its brilliance is something to



CHARLIE DRAKE

marvel at. We have produced nothing so consistently satisfying. (Did somebody mention the immortal Hancock? But even "Hancock's Half-Hour" has its *longueurs*, if I may be permitted to say so.)

In the present state of things I am prepared to accept that the betrothal of a conjurer and comedian called David Nixon should be made a matter for uncontrolled national rejoicing. I hope that the whole of the English-speaking world was made happier by the announcement. For myself, I carried on more or less as usual: there was a slight tendency to wake up in the night screaming, but on the whole I put on a brave front and tried to ignore the whole business. I must say, though, that as a man who renews his TV licence as regularly as clockwork, I feel I am entitled to complain about the "Showtime" programme (BBC) which was sent out as entertainment a day or so after the momentous news had thunderously leaked out. Of Jimmie James and Yana and others on the bill I do not complain. Mr. Nixon's own tricks were delightfully baffling. Russ Conway, with a heavenly choir, gave me a certain amount of pleasure. Even the Toppers, bless them, did their curiously anæmic best. The show was, as always, a well-dressed variety bill, with a good band and no hanging about. Why, then, was Mr. Nixon, as compère, encouraged to open the proceedings with a reference to his private life, and to keep on cracking gags about this engagement and his in-laws throughout the

show? Apart from anything else, all this coy chatter must have been incomprehensible to those few remaining diehards who just don't want to know about what public entertainers do with their spare time. But if this kind of thing is allowed to spread (is Bruce Forsyth still reading his fan-mail in front of the cameras, and showing the motor-cars he gets from his dear little admirers, and explaining how he gives them away to charity?) there's no knowing where it will end. Who will be the first comic to be married in full view of three million viewers? Never mind the act—why can't we see their wives doing the shopping, or their shirts being hung out to dry? If television is going to be allowed to develop into one big family party you'll find me at the local during peak viewing time in future. You hear a lot of personal chat there, too, but at least nobody gets paid for it.

— HENRY TURTON

QUIZ ANSWERS

- (a) Tarzan, (b) Lolita, (c) Kim, (d) Pip, (e) The Saint, (f) Little Buttercup, (g) Hawkeye, (h) Old Mortality.
- (a) William Rufus and Henry I, (b) Edward IV, (c) The Duke of Mantua, (d) Henry VIII, (e) James I and Charles I, (f) Charles I.
- (a) George IV, (b) Elizabeth I, (c) Anne, (d) Elizabeth I, (e) Charles I.
- (a) Emperor (not a type of locomotive)
(b) Gallimaufry (not a nineteenth-century English comic paper)
(c) Anton (not a man: a woman, to be exact)
(d) Pluto (a planet; the rest are moons of planets)
(e) Elvis Presley (an American; the rest are British)
- (a) a parrot, (b) a pike, (c) a hammer, (d) a dove, (e) a giraffe
- (a) real tennis, (b) canasta, (c) Eton field-game, (d) piquet, (e) Eton wall-game.

- (a) a lustrum is a period of five years; a sistrum is a ceremonial rattle
(b) a caltrap is a spiked anti-cavalry weapon; a cantrip is a witch's spell
(c) a picayune is an old U.S. coin worth 6½ cents; a picaroon is one who lives by his wits
(d) a mattress is a vessel used in chemistry; a matross is a mediæval gunner's mate
(e) a biretta is an ecclesiastical hat; a Beretta is an Italian automatic pistol
- (i) (a) Bill Blake ("We're Four Jolly Sailormen")
(b) Sexton Blake
(c) William Blake (Songs of Innocence, Experience)
(ii) (a) Arnold Bennett
(b) Sterndale Bennett
(c) Billy Bennett
(iii) (a) Anthony Hope
(b) Bob Hope
(c) Evelyn Hope ("Beautiful Evelyn Hope is Dead," Browning)
(iv) (a) Sir Walter Scott
(b) Captain Scott
(c) Robert Scott of Liddell and Scott
(v) (a) Thomas Hardy
(b) Captain Hardy (Kiss Me, Hardy)
(c) Hardy of Freeman, Hardy and Willis
(vi) (a) A. E. W. Mason
(b) Charles Mason of Mason-Dixon Line
(c) Mason of Fortnum and Mason
(vii) (a) H. G. Wells
(b) John Wellington Wells ("I'm a dealer in magic and spells," *Sorcerer*)
(c) Wells of Swears and Wells
(viii) (a) Leigh Hunt
(b) Colonel Hunt (Everest)
(c) Holman Hunt
(ix) (a) G. B. Shaw
(b) Aircraftman Shaw (Lawrence of Arabia's assumed name)
(c) Captain Shaw (London Fire Brigade, "Oh, Captain Shaw," *Iolanthe*)
(x) (a) C. B. Fry
(b) Christopher Fry
(c) Elizabeth Fry
- (a) Lord Henry and Lord Arthur have already met in *Lucia di Lammermoor*; the Princess and the Count (alias Oktavian) in *Der Rosenkavalier*; Flora and Dr. Grenvil in *La Traviata*; Kate Pinkerton and Suzuki in *Madam Butterfly*; and Herr Vogelgesang and Herr Nachtigall in *The Mastersingers*
(b) Charlie Brown and Curly have met in the pages of the *Daily Sketch*; James Bond and Jeff Hawke in the *Express*; Harris Tweed and Marco Polo in *Eagle*; Bodger and Desmond in the *Mail*; and Garth and Florrie Capp in the *Mirror*
- (a) Two American civil servants who toured Europe on behalf of the late Senator McCarthy.
(b) A coloured singing duo, (c) An American comedy act famous for their "Two Black Crows."
(d) The most famous night club hostess in London in the 'twenties, (e) The witness who did not see a fight between Jack Spot and Albert Dimes
- (a) Mr. Nehru, (b) Mr. Dulles, (c) Sir Anthony Eden, (d) The American Secretary of the Navy, in 1955, (e) The British Home Secretary, in 1956
- (a) It folded, (b) it folded, (c) it folded, (d) it folded, (e) it folded, but was resuscitated by a new publisher
- (i) *Who* . . .
(a) An off-stage character in Morton's comedy "Speed the Plough." The reference was usually, "I don't know what Mrs. Grundy will say."
(b) A. P. Herbert, in "Tantivy Towers."
(c) Gertrude Ederle, in 1926
(ii) *What* . . .
(a) The letter "Z"
(b) The Royal Observatory
(c) Mildred (Gulliver's Travels)
(iii) *Where* . . .
(a) In a cowslip's bell, presumably
(b) From Sir Francis Beaumont, who invented it
(c) Theobald's Park, Cheshunt
(iv) *When* . . .
(a) A Christian slave. (W. E. Henley, "Echoes")
(b) October 4th, 1957
(c) March 15th, 1949
- (a) Repeal of the Corn Laws, 1846; (b) Napoleon III proclaimed Emperor, 1852; (c) Furor over Darwin's *Origin of Species*, 1861; (d) Queen Victoria proclaimed Empress of India, 1876; (e) Kitchener's arrival at Khartoum, 1885; (f) Death of Lord Tennyson, 1892

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